

Militant

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**Marxist
Weekend
School**

London 27-29 November
See page 6

Stop this slave

"WE DON'T care if we get into trouble when we go back, it's our future we're fighting for!"

These were the words of Edinburgh school students, as thousands filled the streets of Scottish cities in response to the Youth Trade Union Rights (YTURC) campaign's call for a Scottish youth strike on 5 November.

"YTS is slave labour" read their placards, as they marched in support of YTURC's demands for no compulsory YTS, £55 a week for YTS trainees and £35 a week for FE students.

Reports from YTURC members Ed Petrie and Gary Smith in Edinburgh and Ian Henderson in Glasgow

Hundreds struck in Dundee and Falkirk. 1,500 marched in Edinburgh and 3,500 in Glasgow. Many more were on strike. Scores of YTS trainees were on the marches, like the 43 out of 44 at Springburn I-Tec who had voted to join the strike.

The tremendous turn out defied intense intimidation in schools in the weeks before the strike. Circulars were issued to headmasters from the Labour-controlled Regional Council and meetings were held to warn students against participating.

Fourth years were threatened with suspensions and outright expulsions. Fifth and sixth years were threatened that their bursaries (grants) would be stopped.

Wild-fire

News of the strike spread like wild-fire in the days preceding the action. On the day, even schools who hadn't been leafleted came out. At Cowdenbeath 150 pupils struck and organised their own march and protest.

All the talk in the schools and colleges, the buses and streets was about the strike. The vast majority of parents and teachers were behind the right of young people to strike for a future. Many parents provided letters for their sons and daughters to hand in to school to defend their actions.

Hundreds of passers-by and workers paused and cheered the marches, many giving clenched fist salutes. The strike undoubtedly won the support of the working class of Scotland.

Here were young people not just moaning and complaining about YTS conscription, but actually doing something about it. On the Saturday following the strike 30 YTURC supporters collected over £100 on the streets of Edinburgh, reflecting public support.

"We're here today because we're not going to accept £28.50. It's slave labour. We represent all the young people in Scotland," one school student told Scottish TV news.

The mood to fight is there, summed up by one youth who said: "We've been looking for something like this for ages. It's brilliant. It shows you our power when we all pull together. You really feel part of a big movement on the march."

Now it's on to the national lobby of Parliament on 19 November!



 special appeal
Raise the roof

ANOTHER MARVELLOUS end to our fighting fund quarter has pushed the final total up to £40,821, but now a new and even more urgent appeal is being launched.

The hurricane winds of a few weeks ago ripped off a part of our roof leaving a gaping hole through which the rain poured, causing extensive

damage to the rooms below. Some offices have had to be vacated.

Until the damage is repaired our ability to work is greatly restricted, and we are at risk of further damage from the elements.

A special drive is being organised to 'Raise the Roof'. See page 3 for appeal letter.

LPYS Labour Party Young Socialists
YTURC Youth Trade Union Rights Campaign

**Say no to
YTS
conscription**

Lobby of Parliament
Thursday 19 November
Assemble: Kennington
Park, London SE11
(Nearest tube Oval)
Time 12 noon.

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conference** — page 4

Militant

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Thatcherism's big crash

THE STOCK Exchange crash marks a turning point in post-war history. It means the beginning of the end for Thatcherism and its American adaptation, 'Reagonomics'.

Lawson in his Autumn Statement tried to deny there was any crisis. Now he admits the Treasury is working on contingency plans for world slump.

The Tories' rosy perspective of unlimited capitalist growth has disappeared forever behind the gathering storm clouds of a new recession, which will bring misery to millions throughout the world.

This will mean a dramatic intensification of the class struggle. A drop in world production of half a per cent in 1974/5 was followed by revolution in Portugal, big strikes and governments falling in Greece, Spain and Britain, and a further wave of the colonial revolution in southern Africa.

The much bigger slump which will inevitably follow the present crash will lead to even more breath-taking upheavals. Even before these movements, the Tories' carefully nurtured myths are being destroyed.

'Popular capitalism' is looking pretty unpopular. Tory attempts to create an army of small shareholders loyal to capitalism have been crushed under falling share prices. The number of small investors has fallen by over two million since the beginning of this year, and is plummeting all the faster now.

Even at the time of the election, the Tories' majority depended, not on permanent converts to Thatcherism, but on voters who believed the Tories could run the economy well, according to a recent Social Attitudes Survey. What do these voters think now?

The privatisation programme has deteriorated into the BP fiasco. The Tory press attempted a brazen cover-up with their talk of Lawson's 'triumph' in the rescue operation.

But this operation was a complete reversal of his own dogma. It is a form of back-door renationalisation. The government could end up owning more BP shares than it started with!

Not long ago, the whole Tory party seemed to be Thatcherite. The cabinet was purged of wets, and the dissident Peter Walker sent to the equivalent of a Siberian power station at the Welsh Office.

Yet this driest of dry cabinets has blocked the appointment of Thatcher clone, Lord Young, as party chairman. The party barons realise it will be impossible for the Tories to be re-elected with Thatcher as their leader, and have imposed an unprecedented defeat on her. The chairmanship must be filled by someone who will be prepared to tell her, to go when the time comes.

Even the once faithful Norman Tebbit has retired from the leader's cabal. In parting he punctured her fantasies of eradicating socialism by pointing out that Labour was re-elected in 1964 after a devastating defeat five years earlier and that this can be repeated.

The splits among the Tories were covered over by Thatcher's seeming successes. But these are now over and social pressures will be reflected in the Tory party.

The Tories won the election on the basis of a temporary and artificial boom, which meant the living standards of some of those in work were slightly improved. A new slump will mean a complete reversal of this situation.

Private industry will be worst affected. An avalanche of redundancies is possible. The service sector will prove particularly fragile. Most recent industrial struggles have been in the public sector, as private employers often conceded pay rises above the rate of inflation rather than face strikes.

Slump will mean private sector workers joining public sector workers in taking action probably mainly to defend their living standards and often their very jobs.

There will be a storm of opposition to the poll tax. The Tories' new round of anti-union legislation is likely to meet stiff resistance.

None of this is a surprise to *Militant* which warned of the coming slump and its political effects. Had the Labour leaders warned the working class of what was to come, the labour movement would be in a powerful position to defend workers' living standards now and could launch an unbeatable offensive against the Tories and capitalism. But the crisis will expose the hopelessly inadequate ideas of the leadership and accelerate the transformation of the labour movement along socialist lines.

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Enniskillen bombing

IRA desperate turn to renewed terror



Photo: Matt Kavanagh

THE SECTARIAN atrocity of Enniskillen should be unreservedly condemned by the whole labour movement. Even if IRA claims of an intended military target were true, there is no way a bomb planted at a Remembrance Day service, could not have killed Protestant civilians.

By our Belfast correspondent

Among the 11 dead were a 20 year old student nurse, a retired ambulance driver, and two workers employed by the local Unipork factory, both trade union members. Among the 55 injured were two children under 10, one a two year old.

This bomb contained 30lb of explosives, but it was not to have been the only attack of the day. Only a few miles away a 200lb bomb aimed at another Remembrance Day parade failed to go off. That night a 1200lb bomb was intercepted in Belfast.

All this activity, and the recent significant escalation of the IRA's military campaign, is a sign of their desperation. Until recently IRA strategists were talking of a protracted struggle stretching over 10, 20 or 30 years. But the lack of impact of their campaign, plus military reverses such as the deadly ambush of their members by the security forces at Lough Gall, have caused a rethink among a section of the leadership.

Instead of a protracted an unwinnable struggle, they have decided to attempt to bring things to a head with acts of provocation such as Enniskillen. They hope that the resulting state repression and sectarian retaliation will drive the Catholic community behind them.

This highlights the futility of individual terrorism. Whichever way the IRA turn they will lose. Either they conduct an unwinnable war of attrition, or they try to precipitate all out conflict. The ultimate consequence of this course would be sectarian civil war, the massacre and expulsion of the Northern Catholics, and repatriation.

Enniskillen will have two consequences—more sectarianism and more repression. Immediately following the bomb, there was a spate of sectarian attacks against Catholics right across the province.

Incitement

That night a group of 12 Catholic teenagers standing on a North Belfast street were sprayed with gunfire. Five were wounded, one shot seven times and one five. In the Springfield Rd area of Belfast a Catholic woman was wounded by a pitchfork. Ian Paisley has helped incite reaction stating Protestants would have to take "the law into their own hands".

Repression has already been stepped up recently as witnessed by the brutal behaviour of the RUC at the funeral of two IRA men in Derry. Now the state has been given the excuse to take further measures.

There will be greater pressure on the Southern Irish government to ratify the agreement on extradition. The appeal judges in the Birmingham Six case, faced with the problem that to uphold the case of six innocent Irishmen, means admitting that over 30 policemen lied in court, will be under renewed pressure to turn down the appeal.

But revulsion at Enniskillen has not been confined to the Protestant community. In Catholic working class areas also, there is a feeling of deep

disgust at what has happened. This explains why Gerry Adams had to make apologetic statements criticising the bombing. Even within Sinn Fein and the IRA, divisions will have been opened up.

The response to Enniskillen, however, need not have been sectarian if the labour movement had immediately responded and given vent, in a united fashion, to the anger of Catholic and Protestant workers. All the ICTU leaders did was to issue a statement of condemnation, indistinguishable from all the others. Fermanagh trades council, which could have united the local community in protest, took no action.

Two years ago, when the Anglo-Irish Agreement was signed, the Tory governments in London and Dublin promised that peace, stability and reform would result. Sunday's atrocity is a fitting reminder of the failure of the Agreement.

Instead of peace there have already this year been more deaths than in any of the previous five. Instead of solutions there is political deadlock. Instead of reform the Catholic community now suffer even greater repression. On the basis of capitalism there can be no end to the conflicts. Unfortunately Neil Kinnock and the Labour front bench continue to support the worthless Anglo-Irish Agreement and to applaud the repressive methods of the state.

The labour movement should provide the working class with an alternative way to fight back against poverty and sectarianism, thereby cutting across the appeal of Sinn Fein and of individual terrorism in the Catholic areas. Labour in Ireland and Britain should put forward its own socialist solution based on the unity of the working class.

Tories price out the elderly

LAWSON'S AUTUMN Statement included a 15 per cent electricity price rise over two years and rises of up to 10 per cent in water charges. But let no-one say the Tories are uncaring. They care a lot—about profits and privatisation. The increases are part of fattening up these private assets

for sale. What the Tories do not care about is the effect on the old, poor and weak.

"We are disgusted about the electric, the prices are too high already", says Arthur Hare of the Bradford branch of the British Pensioners Trade Union Association. "We will be protesting about it at our next

branch meeting.

"Some of our members are on Supplementary Benefit and will be unable to pay. I am in that position myself. Most pensioners try to keep straight with their bills. Some are prepared to literally starve rather than fail to pay.

"My wife will be very

upset because she always wants to keep straight with payments even at risk of doing without herself. She's far from well at the moment, and she will be prepared to make herself worse rather than get behind in payments. The people at the top never think of things like that".

special appeal Raise the roof

THE MILITANT Editorial Board has issued the following appeal:

The damage caused to *Militant's* offices by the recent storms means we have to raise a minimum of £25,000 extra to replace a whole section of the roof. Only a small part of this cost will be met by insurance—the rest is up to you!

On top of this, we also have to meet all our normal costs of producing *Militant*. To find the money, we have set a special Fighting Fund target of £50,000

by 5 January 1988. This gives us just eight weeks to raise the money to raise our roof!

Our building was bought only thanks to huge sacrifices by workers, students and the unemployed, by young and old alike, who saw it as an investment in their future, a stake in a socialist society.

The Marxist Daily Building Fund, launched in September 1983, raised over £220,000. In the marvellous traditions of our appeals, readers responded magnificently. Life's savings, deposits for hou-

ses and flats, money put aside for a new car, furniture or a long awaited holiday were donated. We had donations of £5,000 and £2,000 right down to school students' pocket money.

By November 1984, much to the astonishment of the Tory press we had moved our workers, press and other equipment into our new premises which we bought for £365,000. This building is now worth over half a million pounds.

Every *Militant* reader can be proud of that success—a testi-

mony to your confidence in the ideas of Marxism. This building has been invaluable to our work over the last three years and will continue to be so in the period of intensified struggle now beginning, signalled by the stock market crash.

But to maintain the building in good condition is very costly, and the damage to the roof has put an extra strain on our already stretched resources. Valuable equipment, paid for out of our readers' week's income campaign earlier this year, is at risk from water coming through the roof.

We appeal to all our readers to take up this campaign urgently. Send us a donation but also take the appeal to workmates, friends and relations. A successful campaign will not only see us replace the roof but go into 1988 set for even greater achievements in what will prove to be a year of tremendous struggle for the working class.



PROTESTS FROM Labour MPs forced P&O, the company which owns Townsend Thoresen ferries, to cancel a champagne party for Tory MPs on the night the House was debating the Felixstowe Dock and Harbour Bill, which will benefit another company they own.

P&O has donated £30,000 to the Conservative Party over the last two years, but to make sure their generosity was being repaid, they decided to spend a few hundred more to entice enough Tories to stay up late to see the bill voted through.

Sue Haney, whose brother Geoff died on the Herald of Free Enterprise commented: "P&O's priorities are still the same. While surviving crew members are forced to survive on DHSS for day-to-day existence—one has even been forced to put his home on the market—we are told of the champagne reception 'to provide refreshment' to Tory MPs while the P&O sponsored bill is debated in the House of Commons. It is utterly sickening, but unfortunately not surprising."

TORY MP for Langbaugh, Richard Holt, has exposed the contempt which he and his party have for those who work for their living. In a debate on Urban Development corporations, he spoke of the inadequacies of local authorities.

"Planning in Langbaugh" he said "is run by a planning committee, the former chairman of which was formerly a bus cleaner. I cannot imagine what skill, knowledge and expertise in cleaning a bus..."

At this point he was stopped by the Deputy Speaker for getting away from the subject under debate. But then he continued:

"...The chairman of the Langbaugh planning authority was a bus cleaner. That is the calibre of people with whom industrialists and businessmen have to meet and talk to, with a view to moving their businesses into the area."

Mr Holt is a former actor and a 'personnel consultant' who owns six betting shops.

Russian revolution commemorated

LAST WEEKEND, more than 2000 people at *Militant* rallies commemorated the 70th anniversary of the Russian Revolution.

"IF *MILITANT* has been marginalised, this is some margin" said the paper's editor, Peter Taaffe, addressing the 1,000-strong rally at Liverpool Empire, which combined the themes of the Russian Revolution and the struggle of the 47 surcharged and disqualified Liverpool Labour councillors.

All those present, who were entertained and inspired for five hours, agreed that the rally had been *Militant's* biggest and best in Liverpool.

Linking the Russian Revolution to the struggles in Liverpool, Peter Taaffe said: "Marxists don't live in the past, but learn from the lessons of history".

Clay Cross councillor John Dunn reflected on past struggles and attacked the ideas of 'new realism' and the 'filofax tendency'.

No regrets

Felicity Dowling, one of the 47, introduced John Macreadie as "a revolutionary on that unrevolutionary body, the TUC General Council".

He said he looked with shame at what the Tory government had got away with in the last eight years. Yet the TUC still wanted to link up with the CBI and the House of Lords to defeat the latest anti-trade-union legislation: "The TUC leaders should have more confidence in their own members."

Perhaps the best reception of the day was reserved for Chrissy Fogg, wife of surcharged councillor Alan Fogg, who said she had no regrets: "When I look around the city and look back at those 47 men and women, and wonder whether it was all worth it, I think 'Yes, every bit of it'. I am proud to be associated with them."

Ted Grant, political



Photo: Dave Sinclair

Section of the audience at the Liverpool rally.

editor, personifying the traditions of *Militant*, pointed to the recent collapse in the Stock Exchanges as a turning point for world capitalism.

Under threat of expulsion from the Labour Party, Tony Byrne, former leader of Liverpool City Council, appealed to the audience to raise the necessary finance for the 47.

A guest speaker was Sam Bond, former Race Relations Adviser to the City Council, who was warmly received on his return to Liverpool: "The policies of the labour council in Liverpool under Marxist leadership, had done more for equal opportunities than any other local authority" he said.

Summing up the conference, Tony Mulhearn, another of the 47, recounted a conversation he had recently had with an activist, who compared *Militant* supporters to corks in water: "You are sub-

merged, only to pop up again somewhere else".

The rally, he said, showed that "*Militant* still represents a powerful force in Britain".

Even an enemy of the *Militant* in Liverpool, the *Daily Post*, agreed that "*Militant* laid on a show of strength in Liverpool yesterday to prove that it is still a force to be reckoned with".

The rally raised £5,700 for the Fighting Fund, and nearly 400 standing orders were collected for the 47 councillors, which will bring in approximately £700 a month, towards the debts hanging over them.

By Martin Lee

Glasgow

400 PEOPLE attended the *Militant* rally to salute the 1917 October Revolution, in the aptly named Winter Gardens of the People's Palace in Glasgow.

Nimrod Sejake, the

exiled South African trade union leader, spoke of the struggle of the workers in the 50s and 60s to build the trade unions against all the odds, and how it had been resurrected in the 1980s with the formation of CO-SATU.

The youth in the townships and the workers in industry were fighting side-by-side for the Freedom Charter—for the transfer of wealth and industry to the ownership of the people as a whole.

Tony Saunio, from the editorial board of *Militant International Review*, argued that the message of October is absolutely relevant to workers today. Revolution is on the march throughout the world. Nothing can stop the working class from struggling to transform society.

The socialist theme of the meeting was carried on in the entertainment, with 'Tsar Wars—the good, the bad and the theoretically incorrect'. Using the cha-

acters of Lenin, Trotsky and Stalin, it illustrated with venomous humour the degeneration of the revolution.

This was followed by Ian Saville, the socialist magician, who demonstrated his unique method of dialectical magic.

The music and dancing went on into the night, below the glass roof and palm trees, with the commitment to emulate the events of October, demonstrated by £700 being raised for the Fighting Fund.

By Ronnie Stevenson.

OTHER RALLIES took place in Swindon, where 40 people raised £140 for the Fighting Fund, and Swansea, with 60 people and £240 raised. Ted Grant spoke to 80 in Cardiff where £350 was collected; at Birmingham Alan Woods spoke to 150 who raised £600, in Newcastle there were 300 and £1,160 was raised, and in Nottingham the 120-strong audience donated over £1,100!

Expelled miner proud of his socialist aims

AFTER 18 years of Labour Party membership, IAN ISAAC, former National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) lodge secretary at St John's colliery and member of the South Wales NUM executive, was expelled by two votes to one by the National Constitutional Committee (NCC) on 15 October.

By a Militant reporter

This expulsion exemplifies the persecution any socialist can expect once referred to the NCC. Ian Isaac was not expelled because of the evidence brought against him, or for bringing the Party into disrepute, but because the right wing have an inbuilt majority on the NCC and are prepared to expel anyone thought to have the slightest association with *Militant*.

From a socialist family, Ian Isaac joined the Labour Party at the age of 18 and since then has had a history of loyal service, in particular to the miners in his home community of Maesteg.

He was the youngest ever shop steward at the Cowley car plant in Oxford where he was president of his AUEW branch and a delegate to the local Labour Party and Trades Council.

After moving back to Wales in 1975, he started work at St John's colliery. In 1978, he beat three other candidates to become lodge secretary, and the youngest full-time official of the NUM in Britain.

For the next 11 years, he represented the miners in exemplary fashion, in the union and as delegate to Ogmere Constituency Labour Party. He was also elected to the South Wales NUM executive, from 1983 until 1986.

But it was in 1984-85 that Ian Isaac was to play his most important role, in the most crucial

period of NUM history.

Ian Isaac was one of the few NUM officials who prepared for the massive confrontation which the Coal Board were ready for. St John's NUM became nationally known for their militancy and their model campaign during the strike. Thousands of people attended NUM meetings in Maesteg.

£165,000 was raised by the Support Group, of which Ian Isaac himself raised over £11,000 by speaking at over 200 public meetings. At the end of the strike he was thousands of pounds in debt.

He was sacked twice during the strike and reinstated, and arrested, getting a trumped-up conviction quashed on appeal.

Yet it was after the strike that his biggest challenge came, when the Coal Board tried to shut St John's. A year-long battle ensued which even won the support of Neil Kinnock.

Disgrace

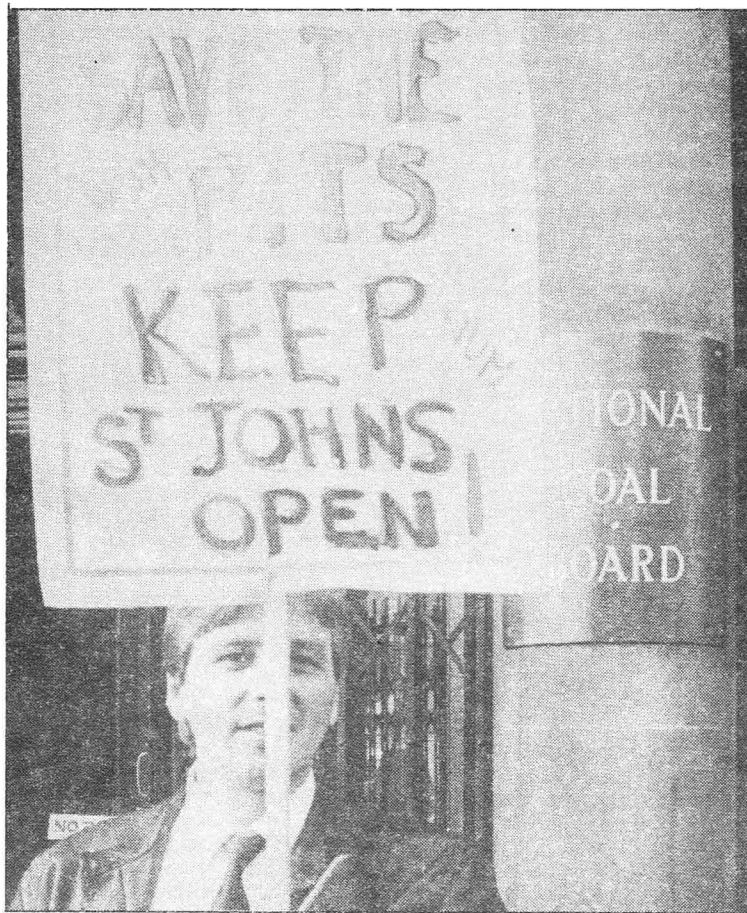
But, after a long struggle and a model campaign, which if it had been taken up by the NUM leadership could have saved the pit, St John's was closed.

Some of the leadership were petrified at his support. In 1985 he had stood for the presidency of the South Wales NUM, winning 22 per cent of the vote for his promise to be "a miners' leader on a miner's wage".

After the closure, Ian was exiled to work on his own in a methane pumping plant, miles from the nearest pit or miner.

That such a class fighter should be expelled from the Labour party is a disgrace. The way in which he was expelled is even more disgraceful and alarming for all labour movement activists.

In March 1986, the Ogmere Labour Party gave Ian Isaac six days to deny that he had any association with *Militant* or face immediate expulsion. Stopped by



Ian Isaac at lobby of Coal Board headquarters in the campaign to save St John's colliery.

threats of legal action, the Party tried to solicit evidence for his expulsion.

A barrister representing Ian Isaac at the NCC hearing described the evidence they brought forward as worth less than a recital of fairy tales and that if the case had gone to court it would have been thrown out.

But the NCC members used the same method of reaching a verdict as the Spanish inquisition - 'guilty if you confess and guilty if you don't'.

All the prosecution witnesses were allowed to stay in the hearing throughout, interjecting. One accused a witness on Ian's behalf

of appearing to get her own back on a former boyfriend. This was retracted after a furious protest from the left-wing member of the panel.

Faint praise

The NCC chairman thanked Ian Isaac for conducting himself so well before the panel, "unlike some of the prosecution witnesses" (who had to be removed from the hearing). Then, damned with faint praise, he was expelled.

Ian Isaac, who is still the secretary of the NUM Broad Left, pledged to continue the fight to build a socialist leadership for the labour movement. "I have been

Don't stand on the sidelines

MILITANT'S CAMPAIGN to win thousands of new supporters in November continues, with a statement by Ian Isaac on what led him to support the paper.

WHEN I was a shop steward at Cowley, I bought the then monthly *Militant*, which was mainly theoretical, but with an analysis of the struggles of the workers in Britain and internationally.

I met Dudley Edwards, who had helped to organise the union in Cowley in the 1930s. He impressed on me that Marxism was a guide to action and that socialism would not drop out of the sky, but had to be worked for.

Militant was a well-established weekly paper when the miners' strike began. Thousands of miners read the paper. It kept them fully informed, stressed the need for correct tactics and appealed for solidarity. Its methods proved invaluable in the struggle to defend jobs during and after the strike.

Faith in the ability of working people to fight for decent jobs, pay and conditions and a better way of life is the hallmark of *Militant* and its supporters.

Militant will help provide the leadership within the ranks of workers' organisations in the construction of socialism in Britain and the world, in the course of this now tangible decline in the capitalist system.

proud to carry on the fighting socialist traditions of the miners in Wales," he told the NCC: "My socialist views and considerations have been governed by my duties to the miners and their families".

THE CAMPAIGN to stop Ian Isaac's expulsion has cost nearly £2,000. Donations from labour movement bodies (especially the NUM) are urgently needed. Please send them to: Ogmere Campaign Against Labour Expulsions, 28 Garnwen Terrace, Nantyllyon, Maesteg, Mid Glamorgan

Women need socialism

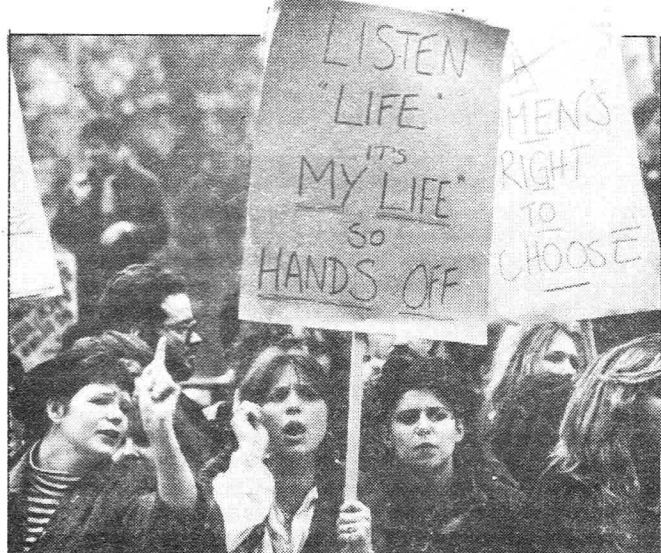
THE LABOUR Party Women's Conference this weekend has the responsibility to mobilise working-class women against Tory attacks, particularly on the right to abortion, the privatisation of public services and cuts in social services and benefits.

It is unfortunate therefore that the National Women's Committee (NWC) has allowed the conference to be reduced to a day and a half and to be organised into six mini-conferences, in reality workshops.

Several years ago, supporters of Marxist ideas campaigned against workshops at National Conference and, with the support of the vast majority of delegates, put a stop to them.

Now the delegates will have to fight again, with the minority on the NWC who opposed this attempt to turn the conference into a talking shop. They must ensure that a clear policy emerges at conference on the six issues to be discussed—child abuse, women's safety, privatisation, health, poll tax and international links.

They must also make it clear to the NWC and especially the full-time officers of the Party that they



Lobby against David Alton's Abortion Bill last week.

will not tolerate any attempt to use the format of this year's conference to downgrade the women's conference in future.

Inevitably the Conference Arrangements Committee and the NWC will have been bombarded with emergency resolutions on the Alton Bill. This time the NWC must give a lead and not tail-end ad hoc committees. It is not just a question of opposing legal changes but campaigning for facilities to be made available for early NHS abortions on demand.

Whilst all who wish to oppose Alton are welcome in the campaign, this attack can only be effectively defeated by organised labour mobilising the working class and especially working class women.

Recession

Resolution 104 from Llanelli, which calls for the nationalisation of banks and finance, will give delegates the opportunity to discuss the stock exchange crashes and the approaching recession, which will mean

Militant Meeting

Saturday 14 November 7.30pm. Bell-air Hotel, 22-24 Lord Street (near station).

Speakers—one of the 47 surcharged Liverpool councillors, and Cheryl Varley, Further Education National committee of the National Union of Students.

further attacks, especially on that part-time, casual section of the workforce which is largely composed of women.

Resolution 105 from Swansea Women's Council for the renationalisation of privatised industry and resolution 103 from Bermondsey Women's Section for the nationalisation of the 200 monopolies are vital if the needs and aspirations of working-class women are to be met.

By Margaret Crear

By-election can stop Tory plans for London

A UNIQUE council by-election is being held on 19 November in the Southfields Ward of Wandsworth.

The seat, won by the Tories by only 140 votes in May 1986, needs only a 1.65 per cent swing to be won by Labour. If that happens, the whole political landscape of London local government will change.

The Tories won 31 seats to Labour's 30, so if Labour wins in Southfields it will take control of Wandsworth and end Tory rule in a council which Thatcher loves so dearly, because of their enthusiasm to privatise every council service in sight.

This would be a big enough prize in itself, but the implications go much further. At the last elections, Labour won

15 out of 32 London boroughs, making them the biggest group on the joint boards set up by the Tories to run city-wide services when they abolished the GLC.

Labour control of Wandsworth would give Labour effective control of these bodies and also deal a savage blow to Tory plans to wreck the Inner London Education Authority, since Wandsworth would no longer contemplate opting out.

Help is needed to win this by-election. The Committee Rooms are at 104 Wimbledon Park Road, SW18 (near Southfields station)—Tel 870 1327 and 460 Merton Road, SW18—Tel 874 4270. Canvassing will be at 6 pm Monday to Friday and 11 am Sunday.

PROTEST

against slave labour youth training schemes



**Coventry
Tech**

**Make
your
union
act**

STRUGGLES IN FEs are unfortunately not just against the Tory government but sometimes against your own student union leadership.

In our college the student union executive have led no campaigns, 7 out of the 10 executive members got their positions without any opposition. I have been trying to set up a Labour club in my college since I started my course. But the union told me I could not have a room because college management did not want any political organisations set up. We ended up holding a meeting in the union office!

At a union executive meeting I put forward a resolution supporting the YTURC lobby and the Anti-Apartheid demonstration. They refused to discuss any of this. Even so, through constant pressure the president signed a cheque for £20 out of his own pocket to let us go!

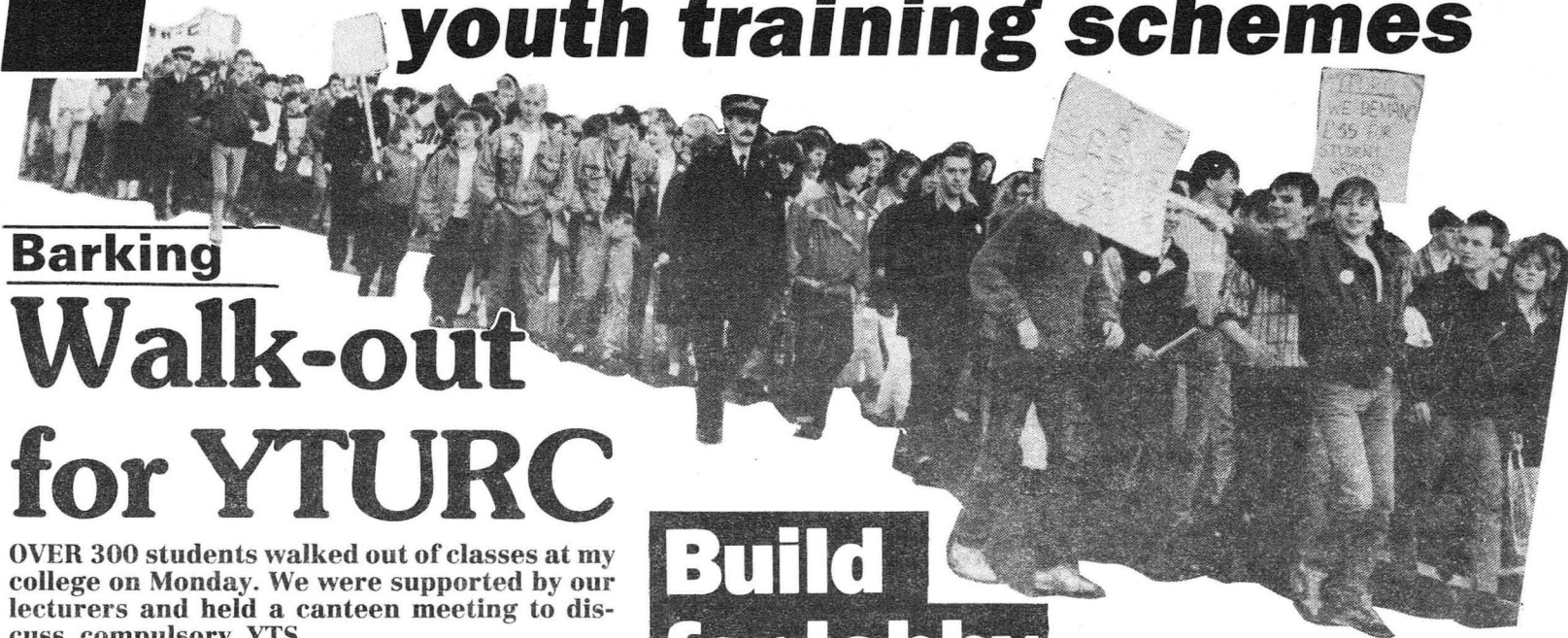
The last few days have been really hectic. We went into the canteen to collect names for a campaign against compulsory YTS and in support of the Coventry health workers' strike against hospital closures. Seeing the support we got, we decided to campaign for an emergency meeting to discuss these issues.

Students were so angry at the union's antics that 15 students and YTS trainees burst in on an executive meeting and occupied the office until the union agreed to call a meeting.

Despite our petition, the union accused us of collecting bogus names and creating a song and dance about nothing. Finally they agreed to hold a meeting. I know that if the issues are explained clearly to students there, they will participate in the campaign.

All the unions in the college have pledged some sort of action in support of the health workers' strike. Our Labour Club is making links with all these unions to ensure there is joint action from the students on the day.

**By Kalvinder Heer
Fels member at Coventry College**



Barking

Walk-out for YTURC

OVER 300 students walked out of classes at my college on Monday. We were supported by our lecturers and held a canteen meeting to discuss compulsory YTS.

I am the only Further Education Labour Student (FELS) member in the college at the moment so I just spread the word about the meeting.

At 3 pm on Monday every class walked out. The canteen was packed! There was a real mood to fight. Colette Williams spoke. There was a unanimous vote for strike action on 19 November.

Young workers on day release from Fords, Dagenham, said that nothing would stop them striking.

We also voted unanimously to stay in the canteen if any attempts were made to stop the meeting.

I asked for 20 names for a strike committee—60 came forward! I am confident that we will have 100% support on the 19 November from both students and college workers.

**By Angela Molyneux
Barking FE college**

Cleveland

3-year YTS?

AFTER TWO-YEAR YTS comes the ultimate in slave labour exploitation—three-year YTS! And it is coming from a Labour council!

The Education Officer of Cleveland County Council, Mr Alan Calderwood, has written to Tory Employment Secretary, Norman Fowler, calling for an extension of the YTS training period in Cleveland.

More time on a scheme is just more easy money for firms who have no intention of taking trainees on full time. The Council should forget hair-brained ideas of lengthening YTS and instead fight for guaranteed jobs for youth.

The LPYS has set up a campaign against compulsory YTS which is supported by Nupe. We will highlight the horrors of YTS and build for the lobby of Parliament on 19 November.

**By Andy Walker
Middlesborough LPYS**

**Build
for lobby
of Parliament 19 Nov**

Support grows in London colleges

REPORTS ARE coming in thick and fast of growing support in further education colleges for action on 19 November.

At Kingsway Princeton College (reports Matthew Pledger) a Union General Meeting (UGM) of over 400 students overwhelming supported a resolution calling for action on 19 November.

A survey in the college showed that an average of £2 a day is spent on meals. The majority of students don't get a grant and if

they do the maximum is only £7 a week.

The National Union of Students has called for action from 9 to 20 November on the issue of YTS and grants. Colette Williams, the Further Education Labour Students member on the NUS Executive, will be speaking at several colleges in London.

The code of conduct is being used by the Croydon college administration to stop the Labour Club from organising any meetings. The student union doesn't

want to organise for the lobby, but 50 names have been collected to call a students' UGM.

South East London FE (SEL-Tech) held a UGM last week which unanimously agreed to support the lobby, and to send a coach.

The London College of Printing UGM agreed to support the lobby and produce leaflets and a broadsheet. A shutdown of the college has been called in response to a call by NUS London.

Manchester

United

STUDENTS AT South Manchester Community College took strike action last month. Student picket lines were set up at all the college's sites, linking with the lecturers' union, Natfhe, who were also on strike that day.

We marched from the Arden site to the Wythenshawe site to form a mass picket and rally. Speakers included a Natfhe rep and a representative from Militant.

Fels members have been holding meetings in the college on issues like grants, compulsory YTS and education cuts. We raised £30 from the lecturers to print leaflets for the strike action. It was generally agreed that this will just be the start of joint action taken to fight for better conditions, which will be discussed at a joint meeting of all the unions in the college.

A Nalgo rep has already invited the Fels YTS organiser in the college to speak at a meeting of YTS trainees on why they should join a union.

The next campaign we are taking up is against compulsory YTS. This will affect 30,000 FE students in the colleges, those 16 and 17 year olds who can't get a grant to study

full time and are forced to go part time and sign on. If the Tories get their way all these students will be forced out of college and onto YTS or lose their benefit.

We are hoping to get at least a coach full to the YTURC lobby of Parliament. But the Board of Governors are withholding the entire student union budget this year. We will be campaigning against this interference in our union's affairs.

By Jackie Chesney, student union executive member and Lyn Worthington, student union secretary.

On the streets



THATCHER AND big businessmen gave BP shares away in Southampton city centre on Saturday, 31 October. Over 100 youth listened to a Young Socialist dressed as Thatcher and 500 fake shares were handed out. A huge sign exclaimed "Be part of a big flop".

The following Saturday, Southampton Labour Party Young Socialists (LPYS) held another street meeting. We will be doing the same every week.

On Sunday 8 November, we held a 'Youth know your rights' day on a local council estate, which was a brilliant success. 12 people joined the LPYS. They are going to have a public meeting to get people on the YTURC lobby.

By Gavin Marsh Southampton LPYS

Marxist Weekend School

SOCIALISTS HAVE to understand what is going on in the economy and society. At Labour's recent conference, while right wingers called for "a wider share owning democracy", Militant supporters were warning of the crash which occurred three weeks later.

An article in *Militant International Review* pointed out that "all the factors that made (for the crash of) 1929, exist at the present time".

The *Militant* Marxist Weekend School at the end of the month will take up many vital issues facing workers.

Courses will discuss the struggles in South Africa, and the economy after the crash in October. Peter Taaffe will speak at the session on Marxism and the state and Alan Woods on the history of Bolshevism. Ted Grant will speak on Saturday night on a Marxist view of society.

On Sunday afternoon, Monty Johnstone, writer for *Marxism Today*, will debate with Lynn Walsh from *Militant* on the Gorbachev reforms. Be there.

Militant Marxist Weekend School

London 27-29 November, University of London Union, Malet Street, London WC1
Featuring

The Crash of '87 - A new world recession?

Friday 27th 7.30pm
Speaker: Tony Saunios

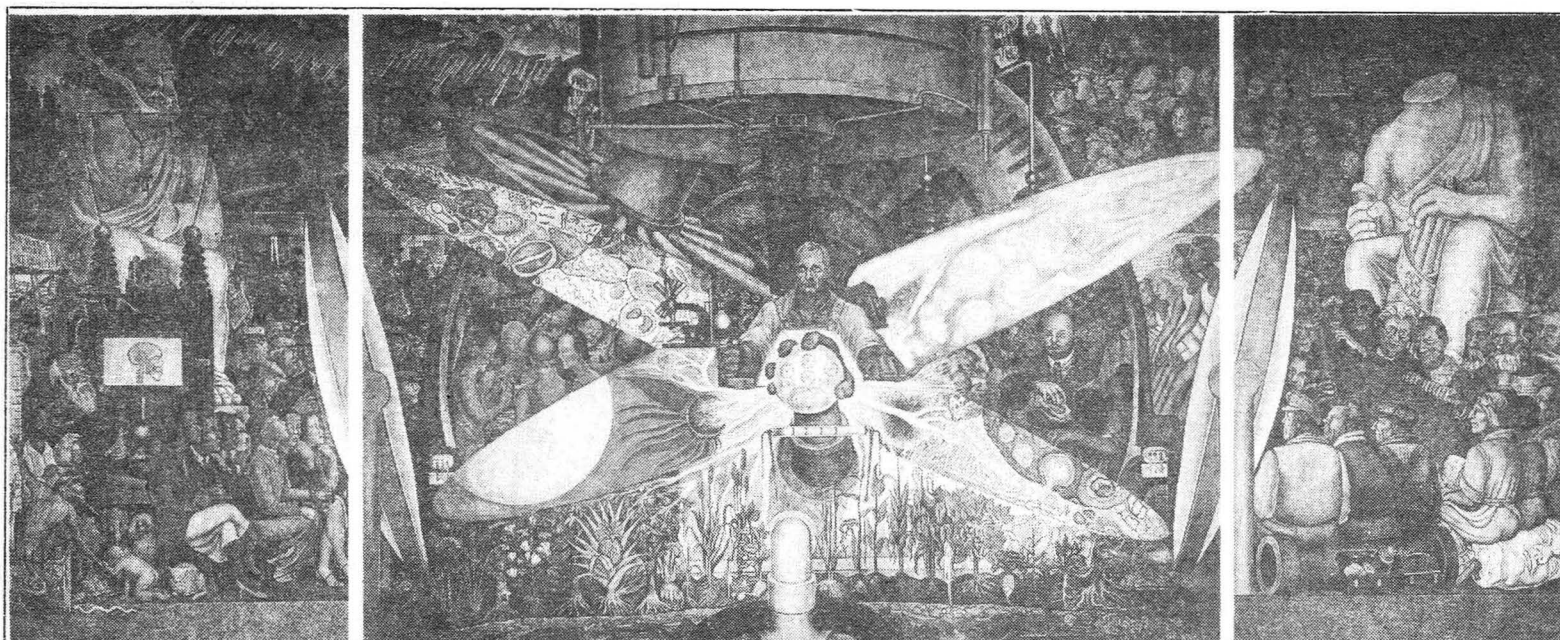
Book now

Disco/Bar Professional creche £9/£7 unwaged. Book now.

Name

Address

Creche: No. of children.....Ages...
Do you need accommodation?
Friday Saturday
Please make cheques payable to MWES and return to MWES 3/13 Hepscoot Road London E9 5HB

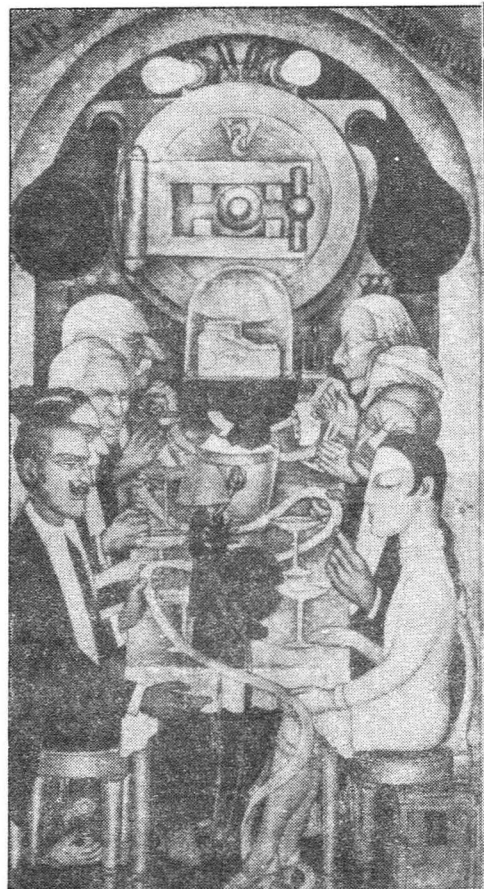
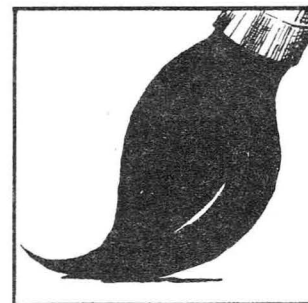


'Man controller of the Universe', Rivera's repainted version of 'Man at the Crossroads' in which he depicted Rockefeller whooping it up at a nightclub, and Trotsky and Marx calling on workers to join the fight for socialism.

Diego Rivera

The art of revolution

ART REVIEW



Wall Street banquet: Rivera's view

Diego Rivera: a retrospective is on view at the Hayward Gallery in London's South Bank centre (near Waterloo station) until 10 January 1988. Admission £3 but £1.50 all day on Monday and between 6 and 8pm on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. School students, students, OAPs and unemployed get in for £1.50 at any time.

DIEGO RIVERA was Latin America's most outstanding artist this century. He was also a revolutionary.

In 1933, the American radio company RCA built a new headquarters in New York. The company's owners, the fabulously wealthy Rockefeller family, fancied themselves as patrons of the arts.

Rivera was commissioned to paint a mural in the building. He painted the magnificent "Man at the crossroads...", which brilliantly summed up the decisive choice before humanity in the twentieth century; capitalist barbarism or socialism.

Rivera's mural left no doubt that he believed workers should follow the example of the Russian revolution; he included Lenin's portrait in the picture.

The appearance of the great Marxist on the walls of this expensive shrine gave the Rockefeller family apoplexy. Nelson D. himself demanded that Lenin's features be painted out. When Rivera refused, he was paid off and the project cancelled. Then the millionaire art-lovers had the mural destroyed.

Fortunately, not all Rivera's work was obliterated by capitalist vandals. At the moment there is an exhibition of his work at the Hay-

ward Gallery in London. There are many beautiful paintings and drawings there, and several life-size photographic reconstructions of some of the murals that he is best known for.

But the show does not give a true impression of Rivera the revolutionary artist and he may be being sanitised for consumption by the wealthier art connoisseurs.

Inspired by revolutions in Russia and his native Mexico, he tried to develop a public art, which would be accessible to workers and peasants and which would express revolutionary ideals.

Conflict

He and other Mexican painters founded a school of mural painting. They were fortunate enough to find a temporary patron in the Mexican governments of the 1920s and 30s.

Rivera followed an erratic political course. He joined the Communist Party, but was expelled in 1929, after a conflict with the Stalinist leadership. Later he joined Trotsky's Fourth International.

When Trotsky found Mexico was the only country in the world that would give him political asylum, he moved in with Rivera and his wife. The artist, along with the writer Andre Breton, put his name to a manifesto written by Trotsky.

But in 1939, he split with Trotsky, without clearly explaining why. He later re-joined the CP.

While Rivera opposed them, the Stalinists did everything they could to ruin his artistic career. Party magazines carried diatribes against him by his former collaborators, like the fanatical Stalinist, Siquieros, who organised an unsuccessful attempt on Trotsky's life in 1940. In the USA, these 'Leninists' refused to defend him from Rockefeller's censorship.

During the years of his closest association with Trotsky, Rivera received no commissions for public works in Mexico.

Despite his tremendous talent, this socialist artist was unable to escape the vendettas of the Stalinist gangsters, or the fact that millionaires own and control culture in capitalist society.

So it is particularly ironic that this exhibition is sponsored by Ford, who spent the 1930s fighting bitter battles with his own workforce, culminating in the massacre of workers at Dearborn, USA.

What a tragedy that these multinational plunderers can still use Rivera's work as 'public relations' to conceal their money-grubbing exploitation of workers all over the world!

By Tony Cross

Left and Right

A safe investment

"THE MARKET collapse saw two new city share issues withdrawn and the only one which went ahead was on behalf of a crowd control crush barrier maker." reported the *Guardian* after one of the City's panic selling days.

They didn't need the crowd control for the BP share flotation but obviously the City has every faith that such an item would be needed against the labour movement, even if recession spoils the market for anything socially useful.

Presumably if you want to make a few bob and prop up capitalism, you should be investing in rubber bullets, tear gas and anti riot equipment.

Mere cash

IF YOU were perplexed by the *Daily Mail* headline "We're in the money" on 4 November, you should have gone Christmas shopping with Mrs Thatcher that very morning. She went through Marks and Spencer's new up-market Marble Arch store like a dose of salts, buying up £619 worth of presents.

She justified buying a cashmere jumper at £100 rather than a £29 lambswool version. "As you get older you need your comforts—the comfort of cashmere." Any old age pensioners who ask their local DHSS for a special cashmere bonus to ward off hypothermia this winter may find things a bit different.

Join the best sellers

WE HAVE three winners of our sales drive competition. Sellers in Harlow win the award for best sales in one town by selling 174% of their target. Harlow sellers have always been very keen so it was no mean achievement to improve so much.

Feature

The best improvement in any area was achieved by supporters in Stirling where sales increased 63%. The best region for sales was Humberside. Specially engraved trophies will be presented to the leading sellers in these three areas.

Well done, all partici-

pants in our sales drive. The competition aimed to show our supporters what they could achieve with effort, and should produce a continuing improvement in sales.

Militant supporters in Peckham used the small feature in last week's paper, targeting a new area of each estate every evening. Over 120 papers were sold in just four evenings; and 50 on a Saturday street sale. By Monday evening the total had reached 235. If this example were followed throughout the country, sales would go through the roof.

Young supporters outside MacDonalds in Put-

ney, campaigning against low pay sold 22 *Militants*. Saturday sales in Gatehead trebled.

During the sales competition supporters started a dinner time sale at Stratford shopping precinct in east London; this is now a weekly event. Keep it up comrades.

Appeal

We make a special appeal to new readers to help in our continuing sales drive. Please write to the circulation department, we can arrange regular delivery of bulk orders or put you in touch with local sellers.

Sickness in the NHS

Tory cuts bite deep

SURGEONS AT Bart's Hospital in London now get every fifth week off. They don't want to, but the hospital's operating theatres are closed one week in five to cut costs. The waiting lists in the hospital are getting longer.

Bart's is one of the best known hospitals in Europe. So is the Great Ormond Street Hospital for sick children which has had to advertise to find money for rebuilding its cramped, out of date building.

A third famous hospital, St Thomas's, across the Thames from the House of Commons, faces the breakdown of its pathology department because staff who are leaving are not being replaced. The unit deals with

cervical smears, checks blood for Aids and rubella and cross matches blood for operations.

St Thomas's is also losing 140 beds. Consultants have voted to take a pay cut to save 28 of these beds. But local action groups say this is a dangerous precedent; they would rather see professional staff getting involved in the fight for more resources.

If these prestige hospitals are

suffering, what is happening in the rest of the health service, away from the spotlight?

Currie's sauce

Edwina Currie told the Royal College of Nursing conference that hospitals should not treat too many patients now in case they ran out of money this winter. That is the consequence of NHS

spending cuts.

The 30 London districts have all overspent and face cuts like ward closures. Waltham Forest has a projected £1.3 million overspend, this is far from the biggest in London. This has already meant large losses of beds, there are no empty beds or theatre sessions available. They say that a bout of winter 'flu would "knock them sideways."

Don't let them get away with murder

TEESSIDE NEEDS an expanding health service. The area's high unemployment puts enormous stress on people's health.

And the area still has a complex of chemical industries which have a history of accidents, and also contribute to long term respiratory, heart, liver and skin problems.

But Teesside is only getting cutbacks as Andy Walker from Middlesbrough reports.

SOUTH TEES Health authority has just cut £1.35 million from its health service budget.

The biggest cut of all is the "temporary" closure (for 18 months) of the Carter Bequest hospital in Middlesbrough which cares for terminally ill patients. The balance sheet mentality of the Tories tells them closure would save £400,000 over two years.

The unions and nursing staff are angry and joined a lobby of the health authority meeting which discussed the proposed cuts on 3 November. The closure was approved, despite a call from a left winger on the health authority to stop the cuts and start campaigning with the unions for more resources.

Opposition

Other cuts were forced through as well. £267,000 was knocked off the district services budget by no training of pupil nurses and £36,000 was cut from the ambulance service.

£78,000 went from mental health care and £214,000 over two years from community care. Half a million has been robbed from Middlesbrough General Hospital's budget over two years.

A recent report shows that some doctors in the north east already work a 136 hour week due to staff shortages and cuts. Many areas of Teesside have no doctor's surgeries within reasonable travelling distance.

People are not taking these cuts and closures lying down. In two hours at the weekend, over 1000 people signed a petition opposing Carter Bequest's closure.

Even the local Tory rag has to admit: "Mrs Thatcher's claim that the health service is in good hands is patently untrue". We need a campaign to stop the Tories getting away with murder of the NHS.

Coventry strike to save NHS—see page 15

Conveyor belt in the hospitals

THE TORIES have a novel way of shortening hospital waiting lists—conveyor belt treatment. Patients are sent home too soon, to fit the next consignment in.

At times, only one bed is available for two patients, and nurses are running round in circles, trying to sort out the 'who's sleeping in my bed' problem.

New batch

During a recent stay in hospital, another patient and myself were asked to leave our beds and pack our belongings into bin bags as a new batch of patients had arrived. A very apologetic nurse showed us into a small rest room, shared by male surgical and female gynaecological patients.

My husband bought outdoor clothes in for me two hours later and I changed in the bathroom. A nurse told me that they had been instructed to bring down the waiting list, so patients had to be out as soon as possible. A couple of

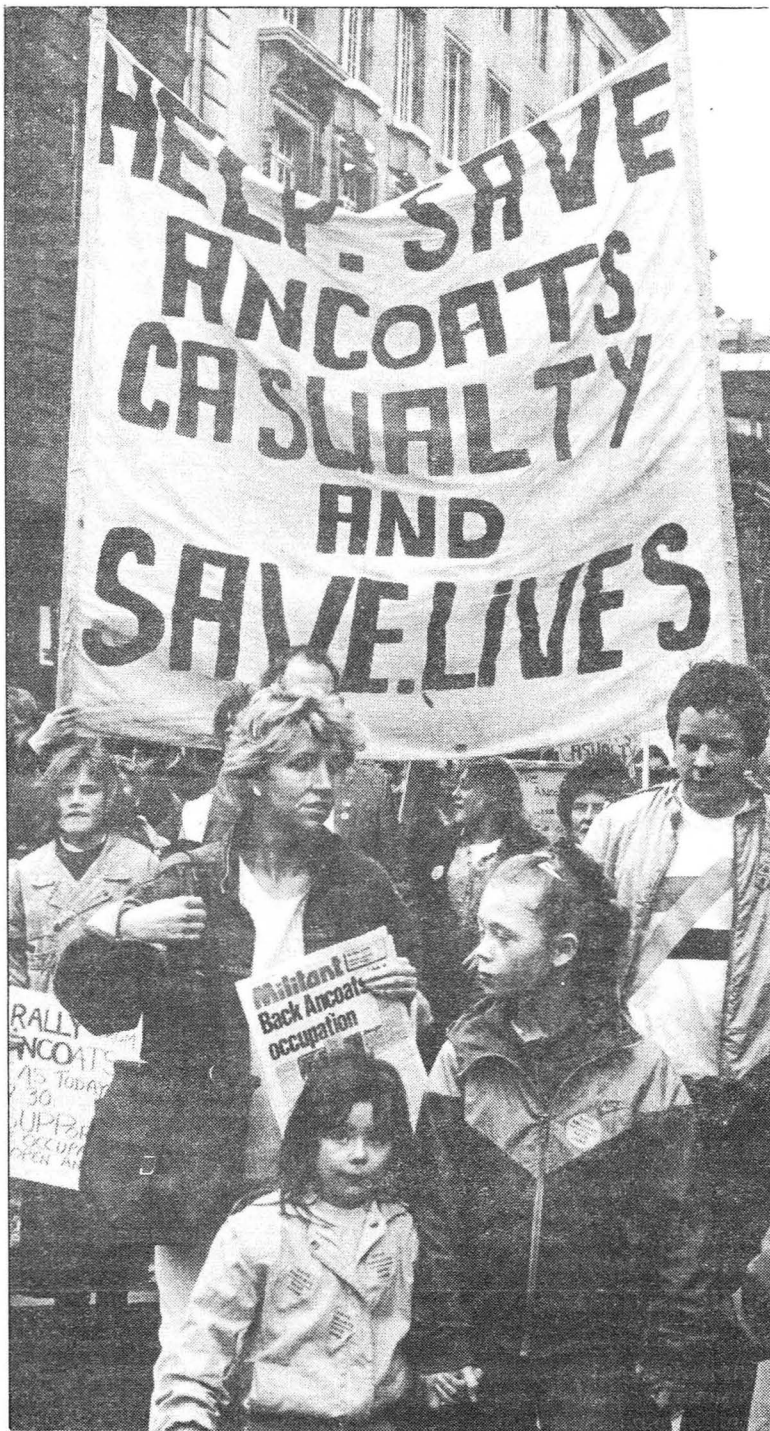
hours later an overworked junior doctor discharged me. A good job, I had no bed.

I had a family to look after me when I went home. What about those who don't? The Social Services department in East Sussex are cutting home help provision, so people are sent home too early with inadequate or non-existent follow-up care.

The government are cutting the NHS budget to a totally unacceptable level while increasing the workload of each health worker. They are pushing people who can't afford such costs on to private health schemes. People are even taking out loans for treatment.

The government won't be satisfied until the health service is a thing of the past; but we won't be satisfied until this government is a thing of the past!

By Jackie Robson
Brighton Labour councillor,
(personal capacity)



NHS workers and local people fought for months at Ancoats Hospital, Manchester, including an occupation and saved a casualty unit from closure.

Photo: Alison Dixon

Militant fights for:

- ☆ Workers' democratic control and management of the NHS.
- ☆ Nationalisation of the pharmaceutical and equipment supply industries under democratic workers' control and management.
- ☆ Abolition of all profiteering through private health care.
- ☆ A huge injection of funds into the NHS to restore the cuts and allow improvements to be planned.
- ☆ A statutory minimum wage of £125 per week for the lowest paid health worker linked to a 35 hour week.

Fighting Fund

Area	Received	% of target achieved	Target
1 London	6745		9400
2 South East	1381		2250
3 East Midlands	1738		3250
4 Eastern	1515		3050
5 Scotland East	1324		2800
6 Wales	2188		4850
7 Scotland West	1299		3500
8 Southern	1110		3100
9 South West	509		1900
10 West Midlands	1273		4850
11 Northern	1138		4600
12 Manchester/Lancs	911		4050
13 Yorkshire	1969		8450
14 Merseyside	1526		7500
15 National	6413		6950
Total	31,039		70,000

THE FIGHTING Fund Quarter has finished with a bang. Activity all over the country has raised £7,200 in the last week, with money still flooding in.

Another £9,000 is on its way in cash and pledges from the Russian Revolution Rallies including a magnificent £5,754 collected at the Liverpool Rally, and £1,157 from Nottingham, with a tremendous £400 donation from John Merrill.

Every means was used to raise cash. Paul Cadman from Brighton sold his golf clubs for £100. A local raffle in Glasgow raised £38 and £30 was rushed in from a car boot sale in Dorset. Almost £40 was collected from eleven readers in Leicester while

Nottingham readers raised another £10 with a Chinese meal.

Fundraising was easy on the Peckham estates last week. A young black lad bought a paper, then poured a massive jar full of money into the seller's collecting tin, because "Militant is against the Tories".

Now we need urgent support from every reader for our NEW FIGHTING FUND APPEAL. Follow the example of a new reader in Lancaster who donated £50 and make your donation to Militant today.

We need to raise £50,000 by 5 January, just eight weeks away. We can meet this challenge if all cash raising opportunities are taken.

Supporters in Hillhead and Maryhill organised a jumble sale and raised £117. You could do the same, with Christmas and New Year approaching. Every area can organise discos and parties to raise the roof for Militant!

Plan for bumper workplace collections, and get out onto the streets with tins and stickers to raise money.

Special thanks to all readers who responded with donations for the end of the quarter. They include £70 from Roy Wemborne. Trevor Grewar in Hull sent his £58.86 AEU branch commission. John Flynn sent £50 and Ron Phipps £40 both from Tyneside, and Mrs S Airey from Ilford sent £10.

Child abuse

Sign of sick society

MANY WORKING class people, the delegates to this week's annual Labour Party Womens' Conference and other socialists will have asked themselves in the last few months the same questions raised in the letter from a reader in Southampton (right).

Many parents, at their wits' end with other problems, faced with a crying child, will have felt an urge to slap it. Physical abuse is understood by many as a response to pressure from living conditions and circumstances.

Obviously improvements in for example, housing, childcare, financial security, possible on the basis of a socialist society, would lead to a reduction in physical abuse.

Class Issue

However, the sexual abuse of children is seen as being of a different order. Physical abuse seems more spontaneous whereas sexual abusers often have to seek out opportunities.

In addition, sexual abuse is often carried out by people who are affluent; it certainly isn't confined to the working class. Is it therefore nothing to do with material conditions, not a class issue but related to 'human nature'?

Certainly that's the impression that the capitalist press has been trying to give in relation to both physical and sexual abuse. Murders of young children by their parents and the current inquiry into the Cleveland cases of alleged sexual abuse have been used to belittle the work of social workers and health workers struggling to get to grips with this very complex area of work against a background of lack of resources and media hysteria.

Press and media propaganda has been used on the one side to attack parents, to attack care workers when they step in and then, on the other hand, say that the family, crumbling under pressure from the capitalist crisis, must "pull itself together".

By Margaret Crear

shoulder its own responsibilities and deal with its own problems, without interfering outsiders.

All these cases have been used to whip up a reactionary atmosphere where social problems are seen as the failure of the individual rather than the product of the system.

This approach was lowered to an all time depth by *The Mail* during the court case following the death of Kimberley Clark. They declared: "Kimberley's suffering had its roots in her mother's weak personality and unerring instinct for picking the wrong man". The mother apparently couldn't "face life alone".

This criticism is the height of hypocrisy from hacks who fill their papers with pictures and reports which depict women as materially and emotionally dependent on men.

Kimberley's mother had been systematically brutalised by Kimberley's natural father who hospitalised her for 10 days with a broken jaw.

Powerless

She had left him to go into a battered wives' refuge and voluntarily put her children into care whilst she sorted herself out, only to find herself again dependent on a man who beat both her and her daughter.

Whilst socialists feel revulsion at the actions of the mother and father, our responsibility is to understand why such things happen and how they can be prevented.

The comments of social workers and others working with

Reader raises a question

IT IS important that people differentiate between child abuse and child sexual abuse.

We cannot possibly condone either, but physical abuse can most certainly be aggravated by circumstances; unemployment, bad housing, financial difficulties all lead to stress within the family and it is then only too easy to take out the frustration on a child.

Child sexual abuse will always be with us, as it always has been, and our only hope is to provide a properly funded social services with sufficient social workers, properly trained police, adequate laws to deal with the abuser and adequate support services for families and victims.

Chris Hopkinson, Southampton.

the parents of abused children testify to their crushing demoralisation. "Many abusive parents have low self-esteem and are isolated with acute feelings of powerlessness."

"Clients will put up with situations that are blatantly destructive to them because, whatever the current evidence to the contrary, they do not feel that any effort on their part will secure adequate changes...or the necessary help".

There are many factors which might lead to abuse. Material conditions are amongst them, yet other parents in similar circumstances to abusive parents will struggle to care for their children and not abuse them.

Many parents who abuse their own children were abused themselves. Others will try to break out of the cycle... there's no single cause and no automatic transmissions of abuse from one generation to the next.

There is a high level of officially sanctioned violence and callousness, both in Britain and internationally, which inevitably has an effect on some individuals.

It's quite wrong to imagine, as was often the impression at the discussion at Labour Party conference, that this issue is one where "people of good will" can get together and come up with good ideas without getting caught up in the difficulties of the class struggle.

Economic Problems

Certainly criticism of the Tories was thin on the ground in the debate. Yet many reports have linked physical abuse of children to unemployment.

Without a struggle against unemployment, to talk about reducing child abuse is wishful thinking.

Similarly, the Labour councils who carry out Tory cuts rather than fight against them are contributing to the exacerbation of the problem. Housing, temporary refuges, expanding social services, home helps, increasing the number of family centres which try to help whole families together are vital for tackling child abuse.

The Tories' reductions in benefits would cause enormous problems when an abuser is removed from the family, plunging it further into poverty and adding to the feelings of guilt a child

might feel when reporting abuse. Benefits must cover the cost of child rearing and be in line with a minimum wage.

The quality of care is also important and especially the possibility of establishing a good relationship over a period of time with other adults. The situation in Cleveland was obviously inadequate where children were taken into a hospital ward and other sick children had to be removed to make way for children suspected of being abused.

Whilst socialists feel revulsion..... our responsibility is to understand why such things happen and how they can be prevented.

Many more social workers should be recruited giving a much smaller case load. Better pay and conditions and more training are necessary and an encouragement for everyone concerned with child abuse to work together so that resources and skills can be pooled and mistakes reduced.

The increased willingness of adults and children to report abuse has not been matched by extra resources, in fact they've been cut. This has caused a crisis in several areas. For example, Leeds has experienced a six-fold increase in sexual abuse cases since 1984.

They had been forced to take resources from paediatric services to the physically and mentally handicapped children to deal with abuse cases. They estimated they needed an extra £2 million to run both services in Leeds alone. Thatcher's reply was that although she shared "a deep abhorrence of child abuse" government funding wasn't the answer.

But would this have any effect on sexual abuse of children? Will it be something we still have to contend with in a socialist society?

Sexual abuse of children is not an act done for sexual satisfaction. It is similar to rape which although it takes a sexual form is an act of violence, an expression

of the domination of one person over another.

Sexual abuse is not random, it's tied in with particular relationships. It's done by people in a position of power and authority over their victim, who is also in a position of putting a certain amount of trust in the adult concerned.

Over 90 per cent of cases occur within the family situation. The most common is between father or stepfather and daughter. But there are also cases of women abusing their children and a growing number of males are coming forward who are being or were sexually abused as children.

Children's Rights

One of the problems of detecting child abuse is that because it takes place within the family, it can appear to the child to be part of family life but also the child may fear disrupting the family.

The course for children being pioneered at Croxteth Community school teaches children to be assertive ie they have rights, especially to decide what is done to them physically.

Undoubtedly this is useful work but it runs counter to all the conditioning of children in society as a group without rights under the authority of adults with the possible use of coercion and punishment. The need to obey authority is drilled into children at every turn in capitalist society.

This system of domination of one group over another, backed up by physical coercion where necessary, is the fundamental relationship in capitalist society, based as it is on the domination and exploitation of one class by another.

It isn't however the 'natural order of things'. Engels describes in *The Family, Private Property and the State* the development of such relationships in the service of a particular economic system based on private property. The basis in earlier societies was mutual help and co-operation.

There have always been personal relationships, taking different forms at different times and levels of development. People still attempt to establish harmonious relationships or at least hope for them even under very unpromising circumstances.

It was only the system of private property and in the modern context that means capitalism

Nowhere to go

I WAS sexually abused from the age of four until I left home at the age of 15. I ran away from home several times and also tried to take my own life.

I was completely unable to tell anyone about my situation. I was also afraid because under the present system if I had said to the social worker "Oh by the way, I'm being sexually abused by my stepfather" I was afraid I would end up in council care and would break up my mother's marriage.

So what do you do? There was nowhere I could go. When I ran away time and time again the police always ended up bringing me back.

Only years later did I come to realise exactly what had happened and I needed to talk to somebody. It was only when I became political that I realised what I needed was the understanding of why sexual abuse takes place.

The pressures of the capitalist system which encourages the domination of one human being over another are taken from the workplace, dole queues etc into the home.

The feelings of inadequacy in being unable to be responsible for your own destiny lead on some occasions to the beginnings of oppressing people who are weaker than you.



From an agitational pamphlet by the National Unemployed Workers' Movement.

which distorted and moulded personal lives so that they no longer simply catered for people's needs but also served an economic system.

This meant the economic dependence of women on men and the economic dependence of children on both. Men in particular were able to exercise power and authority in the family. This placed enormous burdens on individual families and introduced conflicts which Marx explained "are not generated by the family, but by the society and then borne into the family."

In that sense, although sexual abuse takes place across the classes and not just in the working class, it is nonetheless a product of class society and only with the ending of class society will the ground finally be cleared to eliminate it.

This is not just a question of improving material conditions but also dealing with the psychological damage of capitalist society.

We fight for socialism because it will provide the material conditions to release women and children from economic dependence and raise the burdens from the shoulders of individuals by developing community services.

But socialism will also, for the first time since the advent of private property, replace imposed authority and power with real democracy, restoring to working class people the control over their own lives and the society they've built.

Rather than being conditioned to dominate and compete with others, people will derive their self respect from the positive contribution they will be able to make through co-operation to taking society forward.

Sentenced for being a victim

IN 1980 I was taken into care, sentenced to nine years inside for doing nothing. I was nine years old and had been diagnosed as having venereal disease.

The social workers took out a 'place of safety' order and sent me to an Assessment Centre. After four weeks in custody the case was taken to court.

The doctor's report was read out and the verdict was that my parents were to walk free and I was put on a Care Order for nine years. My mother had been up in court a number of times for soliciting and my father had been up for child-molesting.

Eventually I told a care worker that I'd been sexually abused by my father, and was told: "That is a very bad accusation to make, do you realise that your dad could go to prison for that, and he comes up to see you."

After I'd been at the centre for three months (with my father and mother visiting me, my father was still allowed to take me out. This gave him the chance to abuse me further) I was moved to a fostering unit.

My mother and father stopped coming to see me but my grandparents were allowed to. I went to them for the weekends and was abused by my grandfather. Although I knew it was wrong I couldn't say anything because my grandparents were the only stable thing in my life.

My social worker kept changing and there was always a new member of staff on duty. In 1982 I plucked up the courage to tell again. I was asked "How far did he go?" Obviously I was extremely embarrassed so I didn't say anything again.

After four years of watching people come to the unit and leave, they finally found foster parents for me. I still visited my grandparents and was still being abused. I was fourteen then and had been abused since I was four.

Finally I told my foster parents about my grandfather and they called me a liar. I was returned to the 'in-care' system still unable to talk about my experiences. One day I cracked up and told all, about my father, my mother and my grandfather. The social worker and care staff just didn't know how to cope and I found myself carted off to see a 'shrink' who treated me like a moron. I refused to return.

The problem with the care system for me was the lack of understanding and that there was no stable person there all the time. I'm 16 now and can talk about my past because of me, not because of the system. I've been in four different 'in-care' situations, had six social workers and I've still got another two years left of my sentence—for being a victim.

I joined the Labour Party Young Socialists because I needed other people who felt the same way as I did about the system, want to change it and make it a safer and fairer place for the victims of abuse.



Nalگو parents demonstrate against taxation on staff nurseries. Lack of proper childcare facilities puts added pressure on parents.

Philippines

Aquino gets 'tough' with the workers

ON 21 October Manila was the only city in the world where share prices temporarily rose.

The previous day President Cory Aquino had addressed an important meeting of capitalists where she gave a virtuoso performance of shallow rhetoric about "democracy" and bravado against various absent enemies.

She reassured the audience of her passionate commitment to privatisation, and to prove how 'decisive' she could be, made reckless, on-the-spot 'decrees' which she implied would solve all their problems, from power cuts to potholes in the roads.

As a final, glorious prize (to a crescendo of cheers) she undertook to "dismantle all illegal blockades" at factory gates. Within hours of her speech police stormed eleven picket lines in Metro Manila, brutally tearing down the workers' shelters.

The homes of "squatters" in some of the shantytowns have also been destroyed by police.

Proposals were leaked at the same time to impose a five-year "moratorium" on strikes. Cory is thus proving how "tough" she can be with workers and the poor, in contrast to her cowardice in dealing with mutinous colonels and foreign creditors.

The capitalists are solidly on the side of Cory and her monstrously corrupt "democracy". "Democracy" is good for business: for aid, loans, investment, and international prestige.

But their own state machine is disaffected and mutinous. The officers bristle against the very existence of this government, brought to power by the general strikes and huge street demonstrations of 1983-86, led by the widow of one of their victims, which paid lip service to "people's power" and formed a kind of living reproach to themselves.

Only 3,000 people turned up at a rally organised by Cory's supporters after the August coup, compared to the millions in February 1986.

They resent the loss of their status and privileges since the end of martial law. At the same time they base themselves on the genuine grievances of the soldiers, outrageously exploited, underpaid and used as cannon-fodder in an unwinnable war against the peasant guerrillas of the New People's Army.

The capitalists have to appease the officers and if possible reach a compromise. In the last analysis, however, governments are more expendable than the "armed bodies of men" on which they depend.

US imperialism is opposed to anything which could destabilise the situation. It stands four-square behind Cory. A military dictatorship would only polarise society further, and push even bigger numbers into the arms of the NPA.

This would accelerate the war, which could only end in the collapse of the capitalist-landlord state, the loss of their strategic bases in a crucial region, and a defeat that could have worldwide repercussions.

Above all, US imperialism is alarmed at anything which would

From our correspondent in Manila

discredit 'democracy' in this region, with the implications it would have for the unfolding revolution in South Korea and elsewhere.

Nevertheless, there is now no doubt that a lunatic fringe of the US state machine is collaborating with the extreme right-wing opposition in the Filipino armed forces. Colonel Honasan, leader of the August coup attempt, has been spotted shopping for military hardware in San Diego naval base in the USA, having presumably been whisked there from Clark air force base in the Philippines where he found refuge after the coup.

Bizarre stunts

It is now also known that a Lieutenant-Colonel Raphael, deputy defence attache at the US embassy, personally attempted during the coup to incite commanders of government forces to disobey their orders to storm the rebels' position.

Honasan and Co. have teamed up with supporters of ex-dictator Marcos, and are working together with right-wing caucuses in the USA. These include at least one faction in the CIA (Colonel Lansdale), retired Generals Stillwell and Singlaub (head of the World Anti-Communist League, who was a key figure in supplying covert aid to the Contras in Nicaragua), and unofficial but powerful reactionary outfits like the Moonies.

The rebel colonels are staging frequent and bizarre stunts, such as visiting Camp Aguinaldo and distributing badges for their supporters.

Numerous conspiracies have been uncovered. There has been no let-up by the organised death squads, who were responsible for the murder of left leaders such as Olalia and Lean Alejandro (see box), and dozens of left candidates and supporters during the congressional elections in May.

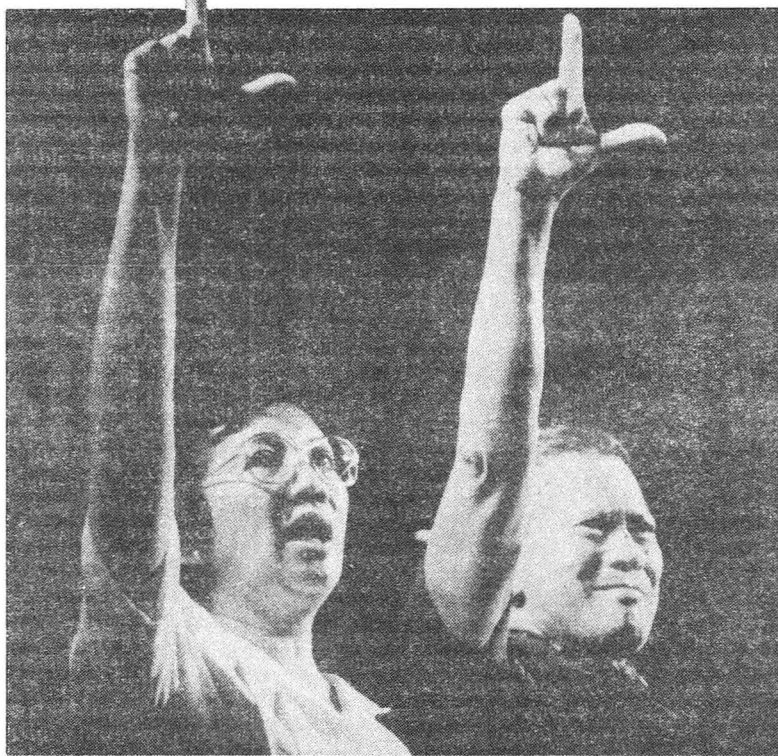
Cory has now yielded to all the ultimata of the Right, and as a result the immediate prospect of a coup seems to have receded. A bill to raise soldiers' pay has been rushed through Congress (though a private still gets only 1,000 pesos per month, or less than £1 per day).

She has toured selected military camps to rally the soldiers (though they were unannounced visits, and the soldiers were prudently disarmed beforehand).

She has even addressed a gathering of the most notorious of the vigilante murder gangs, the Alsa Masa of Davao, pledging her full support and praising them for "setting an example" (while adding a feeble appeal to them to "avoid abuses").

In fact, like all the vigilante gangs, their "example" consists of summary executions of "suspected Communists" and other atrocities, committed under the protection of the local police and army.

Significantly, only 3,000 people bothered to turn up at a rally organised by Cory's supporters following the August coup, compared to the millions (literally) who flocked to her rallies in February 1986. That is the measure of disillusion with her record and growing indifference to the fate of her government.



Cory Aquino and Vice president Laurel.



Rebel troops who occupied a television station.

If the Communist Party of the Philippines (which leads the NPA and the radical KMU trade union federation) were prepared to mobilise the workers and peasants in defence of the limited democratic rights gained since February 1986, and warn of the terrible dangers of a new military dictatorship, the situation would be very different today.

But tragically, the CPP has once again (as in February 1986) declared itself "neutral" in what it sees simply as a conflict between two of its enemies. From holding gross illusions in Aquino, they have recoiled to an ultra-left position of claiming that there is no difference between the present regime and the savage reaction represented by Honasan.

The truth is, it finds "democracy" confusing, with all the demands it involves in terms of politics, perspectives, slogans, arguments, etc. Far better to get back to a straight gun war in the countryside!

By default of the CPP, the masses have therefore become politically inert and indifferent to the outcome of the intrigues of the politicians and colonels. The differences of opinion between the increasingly arrogant officer

caste and the nervous bourgeoisie, deferential to the military, are being settled in a social vacuum.

Over a period of time the reality of mass discontent, NPA victories in the countryside and strikes in the cities, will erode the already fragile confidence of the capitalists and undermine what is left of the authority of the government.

Dirty game

This will create irresistible pressures towards outright military dictatorship—either through an open coup (possibly by an alliance of Honasan's outfit and pro-Marcos 'loyalists'), or a state of emergency declared by Cory, which would leave the armed forces chief, General Ramos, with effective power.

Vice-President Laurel is playing a particularly dirty game. He has even encouraged a coup by publicly announcing that if Cory were overthrown by the military, he would consent to take over as President.

It must be unprecedented for a serving Vice-President to openly incite a coup like this—normally it is called treason!

THE THIRST for Marxism in the Philippines labour movement is reflected in this comment from a Manila newspaper on the strike leader, Lean Alejandro, murdered by a right-wing death squad in August:

"Lean was particularly fond of Trotsky, whose prolific and impressive writings attracted him and whose sense of history he strongly identified with. He ridiculed Stalin for his awful writing, his pretensions at being a Marxist theoretician, his predilection to rewrite history to suit his image, and the brutality (with) which he eliminated the majority of the Old Bolsheviks and installed the Russian Thermidor. We used to call him 'Lean Trotsky' until he cautioned us that the label did not ingratiate him with the local Stalinists..."

Given the fatal ultra-leftism of the CPP, a government of the reactionary Enrile (former defence minister to Marcos, then to Aquino), Laurel and all factions of the officer caste, is eventually likely to be installed—whether or not under the figurehead of Cory seems the most insignificant of details.

But such a regime could not save the rule of capitalism and landlordism in the longer run. As already explained, it would deepen the divisions in society and prepare the eventual victory of the NPA.

A regime based on the guerrilla forces, presiding over the collapse of capitalism, would be driven to expropriate the capitalists and landlords, but would stamp on the workers' independent movement. Power would rest in the hands of a military-bureaucratic dictatorship at the head of the state-owned economy.

Nowhere in the world is the need for Marxist leadership more urgent than in the Philippines at present, to mobilise the power of the working class to topple their exploiters and open up the socialist revolution in the East.

Chinese Communist Party congress

On the capitalist road?

LAST WEEK the Chinese Communist Party held its 13th Congress, the second in 20 years.

As in the Soviet Union and the other deformed workers' states, the 46 million member party is an undemocratic organisation of the ruling bureaucracy, not of class-conscious workers.

But the congress was still significant. Different groups in the bureaucracy have been waging an intense struggle. The congress marked a further consolidation of the process of change in economic policy championed by Party leader, Deng Xiaoping.

The Congress agreed to sublet land and small enterprises, thus allowing them to be run as small businesses. One delegate, Mrs Guan Guangmei, is already leasing eight state shops and has an income of 20 times those of her 1,000 workers. The Party press praises her initiative.

Deng and some of the oldest members of the Central Committee retired from the Party leadership. The new General Secretary is Zhao Ziyang, sponsored by Deng. But Deng remains in the chair of the Central Military Commission, where he will tackle the hold of his opponents in the army.

Trade

The Congress, approved the direction of the leadership-opening the country to trade with the capitalist world, encouraging small scale private ownership, and weakening the power of Party officials over technicians and factory managers.

This has been their way of trying to stop the economy being stifled by millions of conservative Party bureaucrats. This is the root of the power struggles within the bureaucracy and the Party.

The most conservative sections are resisting the undermining of their right to controlling positions. Deng has forced reforms through against their wishes, but he has also used them against the so-called 'bourgeois-liberals'—technocrats demanding more freedom for themselves—because he feared this might inspire the workers to demand democratic rights.

The Congress discussed the



Retired leader Deng Xiaoping

creation of a civil service separate from the Party. Zhao is also reported to want to change the law so that it can arbitrate between Party and government officials.

Obviously the 'technocrats' will be strengthened by these moves, but this does not mean that the Communist Party is fading into insignificance.

China is still a totalitarian one-party state. Debates within the bureaucracy are far more open than in Stalin's Russia. But students' demonstrations in support of democratic rights last January were still suppressed and workers, who have groped towards the idea of workers' democracy, rot in prison.

Although the reformers want to use the talents of those outside the Party, it is still the political



Students demonstrating in Beijing.

Inflation, unemployment and corruption are inevitable by-products of Deng's reforms.

which are new to China. Inflation is officially nine per cent, and really higher.

And the National People's Congress, supposedly the government of China, went so far as to block two of the leadership's laws earlier in the year. These were the bankruptcy and enterprise laws, which would have meant redundancies for workers in factories that were deemed inefficient, and the official recognition of unemployment.

Inflation, unemployment and corruption are the inevitable by-products of Deng's reforms. The People's Congress rebellion is a symptom of splits which will develop in the future and result in another zig-zag in policy. This in its turn will create different problems for the development of Chinese society.

Thirty years ago, Mao announced that China was in an advanced stage of socialism. To explain the leadership's policies, Zhao now says that it is only in the 'primary stage'.

In reality any progress towards socialism depends on the political revolution of the working class to end the bureaucracy's rule.

This will establish the check of democratic workers' control and management over the centrally planned, nationalised economy and put its fruits at the disposal of all China's 1,100 million people.

By Tony Cross

State owned

But at the moment, after all Deng's reforms, while the private sector produces 38 per cent of agricultural production, it still produces only 0.6 per cent of industrial output. The base of the economy is state owned and will remain so.

The reform programme itself is beginning to create problems

organisation of the ruling bureaucracy, a freemasonry by which they exclude the mass of the population from running society.

Nor is China on the road to the restoration of capitalism. The capitalist media almost slobber at Zhao's promise that only 30 per cent of the economy will be 'centrally directed' within three years.

Clampdown in Jaffna

THIS EYE-WITNESS account was written in the course of the battle for Jaffna, in the Tamil-speaking north of Sri Lanka.

Although the Indian army has now taken the city, we think the report will still be of interest to readers. It reflects the explosive bitterness and frustration which is being stored up among the Tamil masses and helps to show why no lasting solution to the island's national conflict is possible under the festering poverty and insecurity imposed on the masses of the south as well as the north by the capitalist system.

THE UNLIMITED curfew has lasted for more than two weeks now. This has put an end to economic, political and social life for the people of the Jaffna Peninsula. The entire

population has become refugees because of the so-called operation 'peace' of the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF).

No vehicles move in or out of the Peninsula. Food, medicine and other necessities are scarce. Shops are not opened even to sell what is available.

Lives lost

Some hospitals are not functioning at all. Others are partly functioning, but the availability of medicine is minimal.

The whole Peninsula has been in darkness for a number of nights. The water taps in Jaffna have been dry for a long time.

In the refugee camps there is a lack of food, water and medicine as well as sanitation,

which is costing the lives of children, the old and the weak. Already some children have died of diarrhoea.

The IPKF is not there to keep peace but to continue the war, which the murderous Sri Lanka army left incomplete. The Indian army has inhumanly killed more than 800 innocent civilians, including children and women.

All this is a result of the Indo-Sri Lanka accord, which was reached between two capitalist governments without consulting the Tamil people.

This accord will not satisfy the basic needs of the Tamil people. Those who supported the accord, and wanted the Indian army to solve our national problem, should take the blame for the atrocities committed against the Tamil nation today.

General strike in the Lebanon

TROOPS—up to 10,000 of them—were all that moved on the streets of Beirut last Thursday, the first day of an indefinite general strike against collapsing living standards called by the CGT, the 300,000-strong Lebanese trade union federation.

Workers from all sections of this bitterly divided country were united in action. Shi'ite workers demonstrated outside Beirut, Christian workers in Zaleh and Sunni workers in Tripoli.

The Lebanese pound has fallen from 83 to 530 against the US dollar since January. Most items in shops are priced in dollars. The minimum wage, increased by 100 per cent to \$30 a month on 5 October, is now worth only half that.

Though called off by the CGT leadership after five days, this tremendous demonstration of workers' unity and power, in a country torn by civil war for 12 years, confirms the resiliency and the unbreakable will of the working class to change society.

Armed with a Marxist leadership and programme, the working class is the only force that can show a way out of Lebanon's nightmare and the crisis of the Middle East as a whole.

By George Collins

Industrial struggle in France

THE BRITISH press have been keen to attack France's Socialist President Mitterand and the Iran arms scandal, yet they are reluctant to report the angry response of French workers to increasing attacks from the bosses.

For six weeks up to 5,000 miners have been on strike against proposed sackings. Many are Moroccans who would be obliged to leave the country, some after 20 years.

There are also strikes at Dassault (which wants to sack 1,261 workers and close four plants), Thomsons, Technip and Renault. At one occupied Renault plant bosses used helicopters in a vain attempt to remove machinery.

These are not just defensive strikes. Workers are fighting for wage increases and resisting attacks on trade union rights.

Workers at one Renault plant face imprisonment for strike action. One tribunal has ordered that four workers should have £55 a month stopped from their wages for the next 33 years for striking in 1980!

The Chirac government is in crisis and the press here remain silent. The bosses do not want to publicise that even apparently solid right wing governments can be eroded by the strength of the working class.

By Soraya Lawrence

Letters

Send us your views, comments or criticism.

Militant,
3-13 Hepscoot Road,
London E9 5HB

Abortion Bill's implications

Dear Comrades,

I have been speaking at party meetings on the Alton Abortion Bill. It's been very encouraging to see the response especially from male party members.

A taxi driver comrade told how he was opposed to the idea of abortion but that his own experience had forced him to oppose Alton's Bill. He regularly col-

lects women from the Irish boat and takes them to Rodney Street (full of private clinics, consultants and counselling agencies) then on to Parkside Hospital where abortions are carried out privately.

Some of these girls have to sit on a park bench until they are picked up by taxi and taken back to the boat for Ireland. One young

woman in particular had told him that she had been forced 'on the game' to raise the £500—the cost of her termination and travel.

I shall be fighting even harder against the NHS cuts and for a first class health service.

Cathy Wilson, Liverpool
Labour women's council

Dear Comrades,

David Alton's Private Members' Bill proposes to cut the period in which an abortion is allowed from 28 to 18 weeks. However, after reading his articles and hearing his views on TV-AM it is quite obvious that he is against abortion full-stop.

He says "Every child, however deformed, handicapped or impaired, has a right to live". I would not dispute this, particularly as I have been disabled from

birth.

David Alton uses the issue of disabled people's plight to add credence to his argument. The majority of disabled people are not given opportunities to make great contributions to society. Getting a job is hard enough in times of full employment for working class disabled youth. With 3.5 million unemployed it becomes a sick joke!

If Alton cares about disabled people's rights, why hasn't he campaigned for

better health care, pay, benefits and access for the disabled? The real issue with Alton's Bill is his attack on women's rights. He exploits the issue of the disabled child to veil this attack with a cloud of morals.

All sections of workers must unite to fight this Bill, which if passed will undoubtedly bring back illegal abortions, and impose a Victorian society on us all.

Ricky Rooney, Kent.



Women protest as the Abortion Bill goes for its first reading in October.

Dear Comrades,

Making abortion harder to get doesn't make it go away, it pushes women already in a state of anguish and desperation into the hands of backstreet 'quacks' who welcome their vulnerability with open arms.

Young and single girls rely on Family Planning cli-

tics for anonymous and hassle-free support. The local clinic offers nothing to women seeking advice and information on abortion unless they are already supplying them with contraception.

Posters lining the waiting room warning of the dangers of unprotected sex don't mention the fact that

Witch-hunt dismay

Below is an edited and translated version of a letter from an Asian woman who got involved in the labour movement during the general election. Tasneem Butt, explains below her dismay at the witch-hunt in Bradford North:

Dear Comrades,

I come from Kashmir and have been in Britain for the past three years. One of the reasons I got

involved with the Labour Party was to do with the struggle I waged with the immigration authorities.

In those circumstances the Labour Party helped me in my struggle and that is why I am proud to apply to be a member of the Labour Party, because it is always willing to help those in need.

I got involved with the Labour Party so that we could remove the Tory gov-

ernment. Nothing is impossible as long as we struggle for it. The struggle can only be successful if we work wholeheartedly.

It is with great regret that I hear talk of expelling Party members. These people who are wasting time conducting enquiries and witch hunts should realise that time could be better utilised in political struggle.

Tasneem Butt, Bradford.



The Party is investigating how Pat Wall won the election—not why others didn't.

Dear Comrades,

My Grandma celebrated her eightieth birthday just under a year ago. Today she is leading a rent strike in the old people's block she is living in.

She has had a broken window in a ground floor flat for over a year, other maintenance is not done, the TV room doesn't have a TV, the laundry facilities are constantly out of order and the garden is increasingly looking like a jungle.

For this 'service' the pro-

Dear Militant,

I was extremely disappointed to read the article in *Militant* 870 regarding David Alton's pro-life Bill. It is unfortunate and sad that you should immediately degenerate the debate into a purely 'class struggle' argument. Under the present system a woman can have an abortion as late as 7 months when the child is as developed as a newborn baby.

Reducing the limit to 18 weeks is a start to make people realise that we must have some regard for the most vulnerable and exploited members of our society.

The 1967 Abortion Act has now been abused by women who see pregnancy as just an inconvenience or a threat to their careers.

It speaks volumes when you call for an end to the conscience vote on this particular Bill perhaps a sign that the truth is hard to accept.

David Bayne,
Co Durham.

condoms are no longer freely available to callers at the clinic.

Of course, safe abortion will always be available to certain sections of society—those who can pay.

Make no mistake, abortion is a class issue. Trade unionists must pressure the TUC to mount a mass campaign and demonstration against the Bill; Labour Party members must ensure MPs don't hide behind the 'conscience clause' and abstain from voting.

Jenny Cole, Ipswich.

party company that owns the block is demanding a virtual doubling of the maintenance charges. Despite intimidation most of the old people are standing firm.

After 80 years my grandma deserves a decent life away from the worries and pressures she has had to endure all her life. The parasites and bullies who only see pensioners as a soft target for a quick profit must be done away with.

Tim Goodman,
East Lewisham LPYS.

Classified ads

20p per word, minimum 10 words. Semi-display £3 per column centimetre. Three weeks for the price of two. Militant meeting ads free. All advertisement copy should reach this office by first post on Friday, the week before publication.

Issue 24/25 of Inqaba

Journal of the Marxist Workers' Tendency of the African National Congress.

★ Reports on the recent miners' strike and interviews with black mineworkers.

★ How to fight Buthelez's scab 'union' UWUSA.

★ Strategy for the South African Youth Congress.

★ Other articles from activists in Southern Africa.

Bulk orders (with cash) to World Socialist Books. 5 for £4, 10 for £7.50 post-free. WSB, 3-13 Hepscoot Rd, London E9 5HB.

□ Tapes £1.50 each plus 30p p&p available from Tony Wedlake, 13 Cae Brackla, Brackla, Bridgend. *Unfolding Revolution in Latin America*—Phil Frampton. *Perspectives for the South African Revolution*—Richard Monroe. *World Economy Heads for Slump*—Ted Grant. *Lessons of General Election, which way for Labour?*—Ted Grant.

□ Wanted co-op and green shield stamps. Loose, part or full books. All proceeds to the fighting fund. Send c/o Militant circulation, 3/13 Hepscoot Rd, London E9 5HB.

□ "Militant for Labour and Youth" enamel stud badges now available £1 each. Red plastic fighting fund collecting tins £1 each. A3 size posters of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Trotsky and Luxemburg, 50p each. Stickers available in rolls of 250: 'Kick out the Tories', 'No slave labour on YTS', £2.50 per roll. All available from Fighting Fund Dept, 3/13 Hepscoot Rd, London E9 5HB. For all orders add 25% p&p.

Militant meetings

○ Southampton Marxist discussion group. Wednesdays 12.30pm. 7 Goodwin Close, Millbrook, Southampton. Creche provided. Thursdays 7.30pm. Tel 786879 for details.

First impressions

Dear Militant,

There I was moaning about the state of things and how no one ever seemed to do anything. When someone said "Ever read *Militant*? No? Try it and see".

What? *Militant*! Horror! Fear shook me to the bone. What would I turn into? Could I ever look my friends in the eye again? Was I liable to be rounded up at 3am? Alright I thought, be brave, so I duly bought a copy and sneaked home, locked all the windows and doors, gagged the dog and sat down to read.

After an hour I checked the mirror. No horns had appeared, not a trident in sight. Was there any change at all? There most certainly was. Realisation of how bad things really were had set in. After reading your paper I cannot understand why everyone isn't reading it and doing something about changing the way things are.

In issue 870 you asked for our views. Well mine are

Socialists remembered

Alexander Dunthorne

Alexander Guy Dunthorne died at the age of 26 on 24 October in Canterbury prison, by hanging. Another life lost through despair and anguish!

Guy was a *Militant* reader who had been charged with having can-

nabis resin in his possession and was granted bail "on condition that a place be found in a suitable hostel". It wasn't so he was held in custody in prison.

His Young Socialist friends will remember him for his stand against unemployment, poverty and above all, his understanding of the urgent need to change society.

Sittingbourne Militant supporters.

Arthur Dodd

Arthur Dodd, a lifelong socialist, trade unionist and active member of Coventry South East Labour Party has died at the age of 77.

He had experienced a general strike, the 30s, the post-war Labour government, the boom years of capitalism and the world crisis of the 70s and 80s. As he grew older his faith in the socialist future of mankind grew stronger.

In his last years he was dogged with ill health yet whenever possible he made it to his Labour Party or

trade union meetings. For many years he was president of AUEW number 2.

Arthur was immensely proud of the slogan of the South East Party in 1983, 'a workers' MP on a worker's wage' and supported Dave Nellist.

We all learned much from him and will all miss him. He was honest, sincere, frank and passionately loyal to the Labour Party. He was a regular reader of the *Militant* and an ally. We bid farewell to Arthur. In our minds you will live forever.

Coventry South East Militant supporters.

As Tebbit takes up directorship, we look at British Telecom

Tory myths destroyed

MORE THAN a third of the public sector, covering over 750,000 thousand jobs, has been privatised since 1979. At least as much again has been earmarked for sale by the Government. The Tories' privatisation programme represents an unbelievable transfer of public wealth into private hands.

By Colin O' Callaghan
chair, Overseas Telegraph branch, personal capacity

Despite the rhetoric of creating a share owning democracy, the overwhelming majority of this wealth has been concentrated into the pockets of the bosses and their financial institutions. Brian Gould's advocacy of wider share ownership seems pretty hollow after the £130 billion stock exchange collapse. But the real crime of the Labour leadership is the way they have blurred the class nature of the Tories' privatisation policies. Rather than raise the socialist alternative of nationalisation under workers' control, the Labour leaders have shown they are willing to hang on to the Tories' coat-tails.

In British Telecom (BT), privatisation's beneficiaries and losers have been clearly divided along class lines. The winners have been the bosses and big business. Even the stock exchange crash has not been able to wipe out the huge profits made from the flotation of BT.

Both Sir George Jefferson, the ex-chairman, and the newly appointed Ian Vallance, have seen their incomes soar. Big shareholders doubled their so-called investment over-



The message from NCU members, on strike earlier this year, is still as true as ever.

night, without a stroke of work being done!

The losers have been equally clear—the public, facing a deteriorating service and the workforce, whose job security and conditions of employment are under unprecedented attack.

The National Communications Union wants the industry run in the interests of need rather than profit, but that requires an industry run by people committed to public ownership. It is no good renationalising BT and putting Jefferson or

Vallance back in charge.

Historically, nationalised industries under the likes of Ian Macgregor and Michael Edwards, have been run as props to the private sector. BT is often quoted as an example of the success of privatisation amongst its workforce. What is not made clear is that employees were actually given free shares and even then some 10,000 workers refused them.

For many of those that accepted shares, the argument on the shop floor was, "If we don't take them it

will only leave more for the bosses to pick up". Thousands of these same workers were not slow to cash in those shares to pay for their strike earlier this year. So much for Thatcher's share-owning democracy!

Punishment

As a punishment for that strike, BT withheld a further 'shares for productivity bonus' due this year. This action only served to underline the inadequacies of employee shareholder

schemes which can be withdrawn at the employer's whim. They can never be a substitute for hard cash in the pocket.

There are now rumours that Vallance is rethinking the original decision to withhold shares in an attempt to restore morale to a beleaguered BT. Incredibly they are considering reinstating a share issue in the midst of the greatest stock exchange crash in history. The timing of the BT board is impeccable.

The Labour leadership has swallowed the myth

that privatisation is popular. Tell that to the old age pensioner waiting for a deregulated bus, not knowing whether it will arrive or what colour it will be if it does!

Tell that to the Telecom customer paying more for a worsening service. No, privatisation is not popular. Dishing out £10 notes for £5 notes has been popular, because that is what Government policy has meant. With that kind of marketing strategy you could sell fridges to the Eskimos. Now, any illusions of popularity will have evaporated, as workers, led like lambs to the slaughter, have seen their savings wiped out.

What would be truly popular would be industries that gave free phones to disabled people; that gave free heat to pensioners and jobs to our class. But to achieve this we have to be prepared to take control of our industries. They should be run by the workers and the public they serve in the interests of the workers and the public they serve.

Private enterprise could never have provided us with a national grid or mains water to every household, or a universal postal charge wherever we live in the country. The returns would be too slow and the capital investment too high to attract the profiteers. But to reap the benefits of a planned economy we must control those industries ourselves.

The anarchy that the world has witnessed on the stock market is but a caricature of the real capitalist economy. The choice is clear—a world economy based on greed and panic or a planned socialist economy based on provision for need.

Bosses to blame

ONE OF many issues facing BT workers at present, legacies from the previous right wing union leadership, is the commitment made to redefining duty definitions to improve productivity. This is being used as an excuse by management to downgrade jobs.

Having systematically cut the workforce since privatisation, BT are ironically, now attempting to overcome the temporary labour shortage by means of loans across districts; casual staff; contractors and even asking workers in one district to sign on again as contractors after they've finished their day's work.

Low morale

BT have also embarked on a strategy of 'Total Quality Management', a concept designed to create a corporate loyalty. All of these measures would suggest the development of an overall scheme to reduce the core labour force to a minimum and run the business on a hire and fire basis.

Inevitably, the morale amongst workers is at an all time low. Pressure to increase productivity at any cost, the underlying threat to jobs, and the victimisation of activists, have all contributed.

Despite millions of pounds spent on creating a corporate image, BT's reputation amongst the public has never been lower. Even the job of newly appointed chairman, Ian Vallance, is threatened, as

BT's big business backers question the competence of the board of directors.

Norman Tebbit has accepted a job on the BT board as a non-executive director. Three years ago, when he was Trade and Industry Secretary, he doubled the salaries of BT's directors! His appointment should serve as a sharp warning to the workforce. The union must now give management an ultimatum. It is only the workers who can dig BT out of the hole it's dug itself, but that will not happen whilst management continue to attack our pay and conditions. We demand an end to the attacks.

The union must demand that BT calls off the Tory puppets and press, who've mounted a campaign to blame workers for all the ills of the Telecom service. The responsibility for the falling service lies not with us but with the Tories—money is being siphoned off to pay out big business shareholders rather than being re-invested.

Reintroducing the share productivity scheme will not be enough to buy the loyalty and goodwill of the workforce. If BT wants co-operation on its short term manpower problems then it must answer the union's demand for long term job security through a shorter working week, coupled with a 1988 pay deal with no strings.

Yvonne Harrison

Broad Left National Committee,
(personal capacity)

For a united union

THREE YEARS after the formation of the National Communications Union, founded from the merger of the Post Office Engineering Union and the Civil and Public Services Association (Posts and Telecoms group), the major issue of trade union unity is still unresolved.

The bringing together of the clerical and engineering groups into one single union, with one rule book, one executive and one set of policies, is an immediate task.

Whilst some progress has been made towards breaking down the barriers at national level, the major items of pay and conditions still rest with the separate group executives to be discussed and pursued jointly or individually. The last two years' pay claims have been pursued separately with nearly disastrous results for the new union.

The left executives have circulated branches asking for comments on the best way forward following a composite resolution, carried at this year's annual

conference, which called:

"As a matter of urgency to investigate the feasibility of amalgamating the engineering and clerical groups into one organisation at national, district and local levels. A report and recommendation to be placed before branches in sufficient time to put resolutions to 1988 annual conference."

Branches must respond positively to this approach from the executive. We cannot take it for granted that the executive will act upon this resolution without pressure from the rank and file.

At the moment, the national structure is an obstacle to initiatives at local level. Engineering

and clerical branches up and down the country have already discussed branch mergers. The facility for these branches to merge following the proper consultation with all members concerned is an urgent task.

Attacks from management on Post Office, British Telecom and Girobank workers' pay and conditions means that the issue of full merger demands the highest priority from the union. We need one rule book, one executive, one set of policies, in short, one union!

Dave Gorton

West End District,
(personal capacity)

Militant supporters in the National Communications Union campaign for the following programme:

- ★ A 32 hour, four day week, with no loss of pay.
- ★ No job losses through productivity deals or new technology.
- ★ Renationalisation of BT, and a fully nationalised communications industry, under workers' control and management.

Industrial reports

Ford workers are angry

FOR THREE days running workers at Ford plants at Halewood and Dagenham have walked out in unofficial response to the pay offer from management.

By Mike Waddington

Production has been stopped on all occasions. The pay offer of 4.75% is tied to a three year deal seeking more flexible work practices, with more 'quality circles'. That means self imposed speed-ups.

A steward at Dagenham was reported to say, "It is quite common for spontaneous action of this kind to arrive as negotiations reach a pitch but very unusual for there to be walkouts in response to the first offer." The same report mentioned that the stewards had attempted to prevent the walkouts.

The unions are demanding a 10% increase and a 35 hour week. The walkouts demonstrate the strength of feeling on the shop floor about the opportunities for improvements in the light of Ford's overall performance but also due to the sacrifices made over the years when the whip handle was firmly in management's hands.

Productivity

The annual report for the last financial year illustrates the regime.

Not all pay increases have been resisted. The number of employees taking over £30,000 a year has grown by nearly 200—from 345 to 537. The average pay of the directors has reached £114,366!

The chairman takes only £4271—a week!

1986 saw record production at Ford—200,000



vehicles were produced at Dagenham alone—a 13 year record. Yet since 1980 31,000 jobs have gone. Pro-

ductivity has increased by more than 50% in the same period.

Ford has 27.4% of the

market, making them far and away the market leaders in Britain—in fact a full 11% ahead of their nearest rivals. Ford occupy the top three places for cars. For the 14th successive year they sold the most tractors in Britain. The company boast that the future of the Basildon plant is now more secure through the closure of the Romeo tractor plant in Michigan. This was a decision no doubt taken as the wages in Basildon are lower than in the US.

Ford also currently use 500 YTS trainees with a further 1600 in the dealer network—a threat also to wages and conditions.

Dividends

It is not surprising therefore that the workers feel as angry as they do.

In the last 9 years Ford have made £1,180 million

profits. The majority of the 1986 figure of £79 million was derived from activities other than manufacturing! Over that same period £658 million, or 56% of profits, have been paid out in dividends. In 1986 alone £306 million was paid out—that's £221 million more than was made in profits this year! The workers at Ford are more than justified in demanding similar treatment to the share holders.

"It is clear that in spite of the progress which has been made much remains to be done." So said the chairman of Fords in the bulletin sent to all employees explaining "Why we performed so well, yet ended up with a lower profit". The workers know what the position really is. The indications are that they will take their opportunity.

BLOC

Sheffield City Hall
Saturday 13 February

Conference '88

THE TORIES' plans to launch their multi-faceted assault on the working class are becoming clearer with each passing day. Their plans for selling off housing estates to private owners will mean massive homelessness on a hitherto unknown level; their plans in the misnamed 'Employment Bill' will attempt to abolish the closed shop and make all industrial action ineffective by legalising scabbing.

These are only two of the attacks being cooked up by the Tories to safeguard the interests of their rich backers.

The leaders of the Labour and trade union movement, unfortunately, are not showing much sign of being prepared to lead the opposition to the Tory government. Most of them subscribe to the view of 'new realism'—a better description would be old defeatism—which says that

it is impossible to defeat the Tories through militancy such as industrial action.

At its recent meeting, the Broad Left Organising Committee (BLOC) decided that it was time to attempt to mobilise the left activists to take the offensive in the trade union movement, and to plan a strategy for fighting back.

Fightback

To this end, it is planning to hold a national delegate conference at the Sheffield City Hall, on Saturday 13 February 1988, between 11am and 5pm.

This conference will be open to bona fide delegates from official bodies of the trade union movement—branches, shop stewards committees, district committees, divisional councils etc. The delegate fee is £3 and each body may send up to five delegates.

The conference will discuss and hammer out a strategy for taking on the Tories and building an alternative leadership in the unions. The theme will be 'Organise the Fightback'. To this end, all affiliated national trade union Broad Lefts are being asked to submit a motion to the conference. In this way, there will be a wide cross section of important issues facing the movement being debated and voted on.

Leaflets are now available for the conference and supplies can be obtained from: Broad Left Organising Committee, P.O. box 464, London E5 8PT.

Get your trade union organisation to send delegates to what will be the biggest and the most important gathering of rank and file trade unionists in 1988.

By George Williamson
Organising Secretary,
BLOC

South Wales Broad Left

MEANWHILE IN Wales, 1988 promises to be a crunch year. Nupe regional secretary, Derek Gregory, has already estimated 10,000 jobs could go with the privatisation of the town halls.

Tory Secretary of State for Wales, Peter Walker, is cracking down on health authorities who are not making cuts fast enough. Of a target saving of £8-12 million, 'only' £1.1 million has been achieved so far. The livelihoods of 11,000 health workers are threatened.

Recently, Pembrokeshire health author-

ity has accepted an in-house tender at Withybush hospital, for kitchen staff. Workers have suffered cuts of up to £20 in their weekly income. This is no way to fight privatisation. Now is the time to fight.

- ★ Stop privatisation!
- ★ Defeat the Tories!
- ★ Build the Broad Lefts!

Delegate conference with speakers: Terry Fields, MP; John Macreadie, CPSA; Lawrence Hemmings, Nalgo.

10 am to 5 pm, Saturday 5 December, POEU Club, St. Mary's St., Swansea.

Defend Redbrook, Woolley

THE PROPOSED closure of Redbrook and Woolley collieries in Barnsley will result in the direct loss of 1,300 jobs, with others going as a result of the 'knock-on' effect.

The campaign of opposition is now building up momentum. A proposal to organise a day of action throughout Barnsley and the Yorkshire NUM has been greeted enthusiastically. Arthur Scargill described this as "the most constructive proposal of the night" at a recent Action Group meeting.

There has to be a massive response from the National Union of Mineworkers and the local Labour movement. The campaign must also involve the unions and communities of Denby Grange and Park Mill collieries. Both these pits are part of the giant West Side complex. Their coal is brought to the surface and washed at Woolley. Consequently, attempts to close one half of the complex must have an impact on the future of the other half.

Management have refused to comment

on the future of the £104 million washer. If it remains open and the two pits close, the capital charges for the washer will be placed upon Denby Grange and Park Mill, rapidly making them totally unviable. If the washer is closed, what will happen to the coal mined at the two remaining pits? Management would then use the closure of the washer as a reason for closing Denby Grange and Park Mill.

A third scenario is also possible. The West Side washer has a rail link, and is very close to the M1. It could be sold off to private industry, thus bringing it into competition with the other washers in Yorkshire.

Whatever the plans of management and the Government, miners and their communities are determined to resist. Messages of support, donations and requests for speakers should be sent to 17 Rimmington Road, Wombwell, Barnsley.

By Simon Duerden

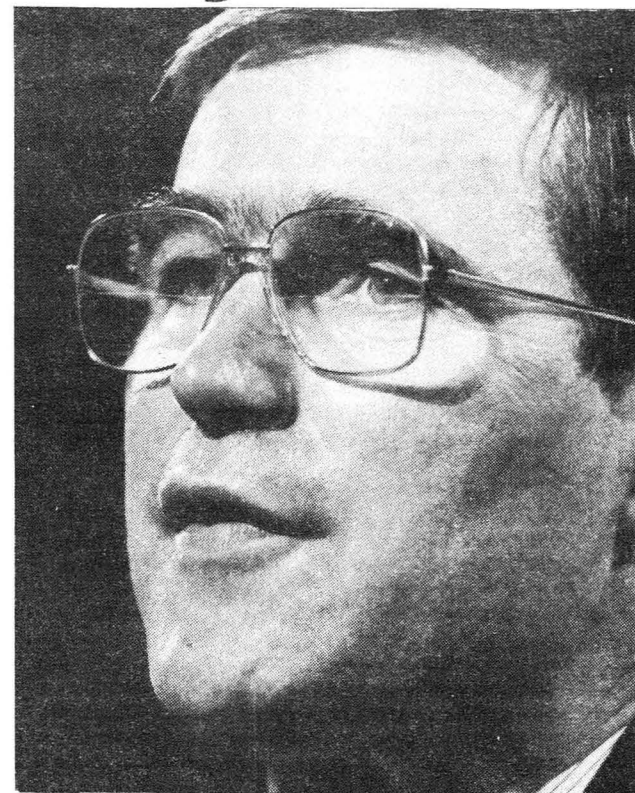
Confed reject con

IN A decision of crucial significance for engineering workers, the Engineering Employers' Federation (EEF) offer to one and a half million workers has been rejected by the executive of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions (Confed).

Bill Jordan, right wing president of the engineers' union (AEU), was reported to be "extremely disappointed", a sentiment shared with the EEF. The offer was being sold on the basis of a reduction in the working week, but the conditions attached had horrific implications and would have resulted in fundamental attacks on conditions and the ability to organise effectively.

The vote to reject was by 17 votes to 13, and afterwards the Confed executive said that although they were now still seeking a shorter working week, this would not be at the expense of "hard-won conditions and practices long-established".

The last reduction in the working week, in 1979, was leaderships must be pre-



AEU President Bill Jordan

only wrenched off the bosses after industrial action. The only time they'll 'offer' shorter hours is on their own terms. The union

pared to lead a fight, not as Jordan has done, try to sell illusions in the bosses.

By an AEU member

Industrial reports

Coventry strike for the NHS

Post workers must fight



Demonstration at Whitley Hospital, Coventry.

FOLLOWING THE decision by local management to add three ward closures to the proposed closure of Whitley hospital, the Coventry Health Authority Joint Union Committee have called a half day strike of all health workers in the afternoon of 19 November and seeks the support of all trade unionists across the city.

Support

The campaign launched on 27 October has seen unprecedented and massive support developed. This marks a significant change in the mood of only one month ago, and vindicates the bold approach recommended by Coventry South East Labour Party and its MP to fight these cuts.

With the Tory election victory, the local health authority (DHA) believed it could do what it liked. Convinced that the closure of Whitley was all but complete, the DHA then announced on 22 October that three wards, in each of the other hospitals in the city, would also close. The DHA badly miscalculated the mood.

Any illusions some workers had had in the willingness of the DHA and their Tory paymasters to be reasonable, were rudely shattered. Only bold industrial action could save Whitley and the other wards from closure.

To make matters worse, the health bosses were so arrogant that they were reported as having a £1300 dinner 'to discuss business', the same day the cuts were announced.

Health workers are in

uproar over these closures and have seen that lobbies and petitions are just not enough. Faced with this assault they are determined to widen the industrial struggle and take it to the whole labour movement.

Unanimous

The call for a half day strike on 19 November has met with widespread support in the hospitals. All four have voted unanimously at mass meetings for action on the day. Teams of NHS workers have spoken at shop stewards' committees and union branches across the city.

Already, the AEU district committee and Nalco are recommending a half day strike. All the indications are that similar proposals will be made by the Nupe local authority

branch and a number of major factories in the city.

Union branches outside the NHS have contacted the local press, affirming their support for the health workers. In the hospitals themselves, groups such as physiotherapists and switchboard operators have pleaded with the Joint Union Committee not to be forgotten when it comes to taking action.

There is every indication therefore that there could be big support on the day, providing the health unions remain firm in their call for strike action. In advance of this action, it is not possible to say whether the health authority will back down on cuts or not, but whatever the outcome, this campaigning work by the health unions will have created a stronger platform in their campaign to stop hospital cuts.

Whitley Hospital

"THE NHS is safe in our hands," said Thatcher during the election. Yet barely four months later this has become literally a 'sick' joke.

Crunch time is fast approaching for Whitley hospital. The hospital is intended for closure in the next few months, but reports that the Coventry Churches Housing Association, who will take over the premises, have already had a new phone system installed and have placed a large milk order starting in a few weeks time, indicate that this may take place much sooner.

Only four years ago, Whitley was designated as the site for a development of a centre of excellence. The local health authority's new interpretation of excellence is to close 150 beds. If this hospital closes, the elderly in particular will suffer.

Lives at risk

We've already seen at Gulson hospital elderly patients sitting around with their bags packed, not knowing where they'll be staying that very night. This could happen at Whitley this December—is this the

Tories' idea of a Christmas bonus?

Nupe branch secretary Margaret Pirrie explained that the proposals had, "the smell of death about them. They are putting lives at risk to meet financial targets".

Workers and doctors in the NHS have no confidence in the health authority who have justified the privatisation of Whitley in order to save money and improve the services in the city. In reality they are the Tories' undertakers, commissioned to dispose of the welfare state corpse, dying of malnutrition.

The fight to save Whitley must be stepped up. Workers there must urgently consider occupation of the hospital to prevent it being stolen from the NHS. Such action would also be an enormous boost to the action on 19 November.

The half day strike call must be a signal to the health authority that health workers and working class people will not stand by and allow the Tories to asset-strip the NHS, hospital by hospital, ward by ward.

By Dave Griffiths

REPORTS INDICATE that postal workers, members of the Union of Communications Workers, are voting in favour of industrial action in the ballot over the claim for a shorter working week.

By Chris Whale

North London District C and CS branch (personal capacity)

The new wave of militancy which has swept the industry, with 91 disputes since April, has arisen due to the continuing attacks by management on all aspects of our working conditions.

The demand for a reduction in hours itself is clearly just—the last cut in hours to the present 43 hour week took place in 1965. But attempts by the Post Office to bring in more and more 'casuals' to cope with excessive workloads has given us an even stronger case. A cut in the working week would lay the basis for ex-

panding the full-time workforce. We want real jobs not 'casuals'. And a real increase in wages!

Nevertheless, with the ballot closing as we go to press, the point now is not so much the need to justify our case but how to further it. A favourable ballot result will strengthen the union's hand. But, if management still refuse to negotiate, the union must be prepared for action.

As a minimum, a programme of selective strike action involving all grades to maximise unity should be undertaken. There must be full involvement of local activists to ensure its effectiveness. Regular mass meetings of all the members must be organised to keep them in touch.

Such measures should be seen as a means of building the confidence of the membership and preparing the ground for an all-out strike if the Post Office refuses to back down and meet the claim in full.

Cowley action

TRANSPORT AND General Workers Union (TGWU) members in the Cowley assembly plant have voted overwhelmingly to back an earlier decision in favour of a one day strike. The strike is in protest at Austin Rover management's move to freeze the pension scheme.

After pressure from the rank and file, and from some shop stewards, the TGWU assembly plant leadership organised the mass meeting, where only about one worker in ten voted against, indicating the mood of anger in the plant. The workers are having their rights and conditions, won by the unions over 20 years, taken away by one of the most vicious managements in British industry.

The workers need a united fightback by the trade unions, and the leadership must now take advantage of this massive vote. This should be the start of an effective campaign—not the end of it.

The union leadership at the assembly plant must take the mandate for action to the other Austin Rover plants to start a campaign on the issue not only of the pension scheme rights but also against the speed-ups and the disciplinary measures.

CPSA Broad Left

OVER 300 members attended the recent CPSA Broad Left Conference to draw up a programme capable of tackling the problems facing our members.

By Julie Wyeth

branch chair, CPSA, DE London North, personal capacity

The major debate was on pay. Conference backed a claim and strategy put forward by *Militant* supporters reflecting the membership's anger and determination to fight for a decent settlement. The Broad Left will campaign for a claim including:

- ☆ Flat rate increase of £25 a week.
- ☆ £134 minimum wage.
- ☆ Six weeks annual leave.
- ☆ A 35 hour week.
- ☆ Abolition of incremental scales.

Conference expressed opposition to all forms of regional merit or local pay. It recognised that there should be a short, sharp build up to a vote on all-out action in the form of a limited period of selective and national action.

The task facing the

Broad Left now is to ensure that these motions are supported at the forthcoming special pay conference.

All-out strike action over pay is now firmly on the agenda. We must ensure we build members' confidence in the ability of the union to win. We must explain how members can manage despite the hardships of all-out action. Such a campaign must be launched immediately following the special Pay Conference.

Conference also discussed the vital problem of how to involve more women in both Broad Left and CPSA. It decided the way forward lay in taking up the practical issues facing women members, such as creche facilities, cancer screening and abortion rights.

Conference rejected allegations that John Macreadie had not given the London Passport Office strikers his full support.

The task now is to take Broad Left policies and programme out to the membership to build for the struggles which lie ahead.

Militant

Inside
Sickness in the NHS
 See page 7
Telecom-Tory myth destroyed—See page 13

Stop Tories'

THE TORIES' new immigration bill will add further to the suffering of black and Asian families in Britain. The bill (published on Friday) will remove the automatic right of men who entered Britain before 1973 to have their wives and children settle with them.

**No to divide and rule!
 End immigration controls now!**

racist laws

By Colin De Freitas

The European court had ruled that Britain's right of entry laws discriminated against women, who had no such freedom. The Tories' answer was to abolish the right for men as well!

Existing immigration laws have brutally split up families, particularly tens of thousands of Asian families in Britain.

Even before these new laws, many men have waited 12 years for immigration authorities to let their families join them. Now they clearly won't be allowed in.

Humiliating

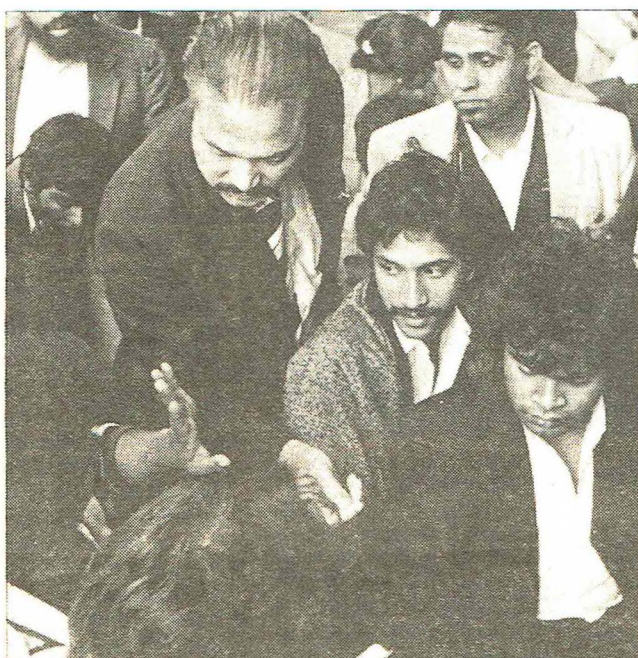
Even the Tory *Independent* called the new legislation "petty and unnecessary". Last year, there were only 8,200 wives and children waiting to join their husbands.

They are continually subjected to the most humiliating tests and a barrage of questions by immigration officials in their country of origin and at the point of entry.

One son of a British citizen of Bangladeshi origin was refused entry because he could not adequately complete his family tree. When his application came up again, he was turned down because he completed his family tree too easily!

This is the ninth major change to immigration laws since 1979. It comes a year after visa controls were introduced for visitors from the Indian sub continent, Nigeria and Ghana.

As *Militant* said then, visa laws



Worried Asian workers at Heathrow Airport after last years visa law changes.

are used to harass black visitors to Britain and make holidays and visits to relatives in Britain much more difficult. More visas are being refused already. And MPs find it more difficult to intervene; only 575 cases of people detained at ports were taken up between May and August this year compared to 3,148 for the same period in 1986.

The Tories want to go even further. Douglas Hurd's recent attempt to repatriate six Tamils was thrown out by the Court of Appeal. Hurd warns that if the Lords uphold the appeal court's finding, he will change the asylum laws. This could mean death for many refugees escaping persecu-

tion. The new restrictions will not be applied stringently to people from Australia, Canada or New Zealand.

Their real purpose is racist—to give white workers the impression that 'immigrants', rather than the Tories, are to blame for unemployment and other social ills, even though for 20 years, more people have left Britain than entered.

Don't let the Tories divide workers. Expose the Tories' racist lies designed to hide the crisis of the bosses' system. Labour must oppose these new laws and fight for an end to immigration controls.

THOMAS LEE, a Jamaican born man from Stoke Newington was on his way home from a friend's house when he was brutally attacked by racist thugs. He died of his injuries.

The Black Youth Rally will be vital in building opposition to racist violence and the social and economic burdens black youth in particular face. The only way to fight is through the labour movement. Get organised. Come to the Black Youth Rally '87!

Lambeth Labour Party Young Socialists

National Black youth rally

Organise the fight-back

Sat. 5th December
 Town Hall, Brixton,
 London Start 1pm

Invited speakers include:
 Arthur Scargill, Paul Boateng MP,
 Linda Douglas (LP NEC)

Become a
Militant
 supporter



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Make cheques payable to *Militant*.

What we stand for

- The immediate introduction of a 35-hour week without loss in pay as a step towards the elimination of unemployment.
- Reversal of all Tory cuts and a massive programme of public works on housing, education, the health service, etc.
- A minimum wage of £120 a week tied to the cost of living for all, including sick and disabled people.
- A socialist plan of production democratically drawn up and implemented by committees involving the trade unions, shop stewards, the unwaged and small business people.
- Opposition to the capitalist Common Market, the EEC. For a socialist United States of Europe as a step towards a World Socialist Federation.
- Workers' management of the nationalised industries. These should be run on the basis of one-third of the places on the management board coming from the unions in the industry, one-third from the TUC representing the working class as a whole, and one-third from the government.
- Opposition to the Tory government's anti-union laws and reversal of attacks on the trade unions.
- Massive cuts in arms spending. Support for unilateral nuclear disarmament, but with the recognition that only a socialist change of society in Britain and internationally can eliminate the danger of a nuclear holocaust.
- Nationalisation of the top 200 monopolies, including the banks and insurance companies which control 80 per cent to 85 per cent of the economy. This should be through an Enabling Bill in Parliament with minimum compensation on the basis of proven need.